This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

WOMAN'S ARCHIVES

Gift of

MARION HATHWAY PARKER '16

Schlesinger Library

SCHLESINGER LIBRARY
RS LK5R %

ER LIBRARY
K5R %

Engraved by J. Paton.

Your affectionate friend
R. G. Webster.

BIOGRAPHY

OF

MRS. REBECCA GAIR WEBSTER.

BY T. D. P. STONE.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY CROCKER AND BREWSTER,
47, Washington-Street.
1848.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1848,
BY CROCKER AND BREWSTER,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

285.8
W138

TO

"THE DEAR SISTERS IN CHRIST AT PROVIDENCE" WITH WHOM MRS. WEBSTER USED TO "DELIGHT TO MEET,"

TO

"THE BELOVED LADIES OF" HER "DEAR HUSBAND'S PARISH,"

AND TO THE

DAUGHTERS OF ZION IN HIS OWN CONGREGATION,

THESE PAGES ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THE COMPILER.

PREFACE.

NONE who were acquainted with Mrs. Webster will be disposed to inquire why this volume has been prepared. Impatient to recal reminiscences of one whose influence was so much prized while she lived,—a preface will not be likely to receive more than a passing glance from them. Fearful, perhaps, at first, whether *materials* for the work could be *procured*, they are rejoiced to find evidence before them that those fears were groundless.

But strangers to her name and character expect to be informed, at the outset, why they are invited to the perusal of *another* sketch of a human life. To such it is due to state, that after the decease of the wife of a New England pastor, his people desired the privilege of perpetuating, for their own and their children's benefit, the memory of her worth. The preacher at her funeral was requested to compile her biography. Rev. F. Wayland, D. D., President of Brown University, who had known her history, expressed it as his opinion that, "*If her true character could be portrayed, for the benefit of the living, it would fill a nich in the already rich collection of American fe-*

male biography which had been thus far unoccupied." Subsequently, on learning that ample materials were accessible, he expressed his "*wish that the work might be executed.*—Rev. Jacob Ide, D. D., of Medway, Mass., expressed "*a strong personal desire to see a memoir of Mrs. Webster,*" adding, "*that few, if any, of the ladies of his acquaintance had possessed a character so worthy of being held up as an example of refined and intelligent piety.*"—Other clergymen of her acquaintance gave the same opinion on the subject, one of them "*wishing to be able to present to the young ladies of his parish just such a model of Christian excellence as her life would furnish.*" Thus encouraged, the compiler has attempted to render the work a faithful record, and an interesting and useful book, and leaves its success with God, and the Christian public.

Holliston, Ms., Jan. 1848.

INTRODUCTION.

REV. JOHN RUSSELL, WHO DIED IN 1680,—AND REV. THOMAS GAIR, WHO DIED IN 1790.

NOT a few worthy men, who shared the trials of Roger Williams, were contented to do their duty in a retirement from which neither ambition nor worldly interest could draw them. Many families in Rhode Island are therefore unable to trace their genealogies in the public records. Some of the following items are consequently valuable for other reasons as well as for their immediate connection with this biographical sketch. The 1st Baptist Church in Boston, when it began to worship in town, after its removal from "its place of worship for seven years upon Noddle's Island," received as its pastor Mr. John Russell. Although he lived but one year after his ordination, he became, after his death, well known in the Colonies, and in England by his narrative of the "forfeitures, stripes and imprisonments," which he and his associates endured on account of their religious opinions. He was originally a shoemaker, and, as such, was allowed by all to be an "honest and worthy man." His talents, piety, and learning introduced him to the pulpit. We see indications of his mental power in the fact that a Latin Essay, by a Boston divine, in reply to his narrative, begins with the motto,

"Cobbler keep to your last." There would have been no such strong desire in one of the great men of the day, to keep him *to his last* if he had not done important work without it. One of the grounds of opposition to his book was that "it created great excitement." To allay this Dr. Increase Mather condescended to write a pamphlet. Mr. Willard attempted to destroy his posthumous influence by writing, "Truly if goodman Russell was a fit man for a minister, we have but fooled ourselves in building colleges, and in instructing children in learning."—Hubbard endeavored to counteract the tendency of his narrative by calling him "One John Russell, a wedder, drop'd shoemaker."—Yet they all laid to his charge no crime, no fault save that "he became a priest from the lowest of the people," *as they regarded rank;* and besides, he had ventured to print the story of his own and his companion's sufferings from these very men. Yet Kilpin, Dyke, Collins, Knollys, Harris and Cox, in 1680, commended the book, in a joint preface, as a simple narrative of facts which could not be denied. They never *were* denied. Their publication was of eminent service in arresting the madness of sectarian bigotry and intolerance. His name deserves a place among the benefactors of New England. The prayers and dying counsels of "goodman Russell" have been blessed to his numerous descendants. His daughter imparted those faithful teachings to her sons, Job, Russell, and John Mason, who successively became pastors of the Baptist church in Swanzey, in 1738, 1752, and 1788. They are called by Benedict, "Those three eminent ministers of Swanzey."—The same author states, "From him also descended the Russells of Providence, R. I."—Among them was the subject of this memoir. She read Exodus xx, 6, "And showing mercy unto thou-

sands of them that love me and keep my commandments." She compared that passage with the words of the commentator, "This is promised unto thousands, not only to vast multitudes but to the third and fourth generation, or to successive generations to the end of time."—What a lesson for the living, to find John Russell's prayers offered before 1680, answered in the life which closed in 1846!

When the Rev. Samuel Stillman began his labors as pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston, eighty-five years after Mr. John Russell's death, he met in the house of one of his "honest, worthy, but not opulent," parishioners, an interesting lad, aged nine years, named Thomas Gair. The boy was usually at meeting on the Sabbath, and uniformly sober, and regular in his conduct. In Feb. 1771, three youths were baptized, whose appearance interested Thomas in the ceremony, and led him to serious reflections upon his own duty, and need of preparation for death. On hearing a sermon of his pastor upon the "plague of one's own heart," from 1 Kings, viii, 38, he became convinced that, although upright, and blameless, and lovely in his whole external deportment, although in the sight of man perfectly moral,—he had never loved God "with all his heart," and therefore was condemned by the Bible, and by his conscience, to God's eternal wrath. He often visited his pastor to receive instruction in regard to "the way to be saved." He wrote of himself, at that time, as "sinning and repenting continually." A sermon from 1 John v, 10, "He that believeth on the son of God hath the witness in himself," led him to apply in prayer to Christ for relief. He found it by accepting pardon, as a free, undeserved gift of God, purchased on the cross by the suffering of punishment deserved by man, by the Lord Jesus Christ. He openly professed his attach-

General mourning in Boston for Mr. Gair.

ment to Christ, as his God, and king, as well as Saviour, Aug. 4, 1771. He soon felt a strong wish to preach the gospel. Having fitted for college with his pastor, he graduated at Brown University, and was ordained pastor of the Baptist Church in Medfield in Sept. 1776, Dr. Stillman preaching on the occasion. In 1786 he was invited to the 2d Baptist Church in Boston, which since that day, when the pastor of the 1st Baptist Church was preacher at the installation of "his son in the faith," has enjoyed entire freedom from the long existing differences with its elder sister. A cotemporary says of him, "He here became exceedingly popular, growing rapidly in knowledge and usefulness. God gave many seals to his labors. That tall thin figure, swayed by deep emotion, rivetted the attention of an attached congregation. At their dwellings they were equally delighted with the urbanity of his manners and the sweetness of his temper. The depth of his thoughts lost nothing in delivery, by his full, well-modulated voice." He could sympathise with the mourner, for in addition to less affecting bereavements, two of his own infant children slept beneath the sod, at Medfield. Five others were now beginning to appreciate his counsels, and reciprocate his love, while they already solaced, as they clustered around him, many a weary hour. He was often solicitous respecting their future. He could not leave them estates. He could only aid in preparation for active life, and leave to them the example, and the prayers of a righteous man. This he did.

"When it was reported," writes an eye witness, "in the streets of Boston, on the morning of April 27, 1790,—'Rev. Mr. Gair died last night between eleven and twelve o'clock,'—there was unspeakable grief in the town in general, as well as among his flock and in his family.

A few days before he was suddenly attacked with severe headache. It grew worse day by day. He at length gave up family prayer. He had offered his last prayer, uttered his last counsel. The venerable Dr. Stillman, after lingering for two days over his "insensible friend and brother, gave vent to his agonizing grief" by writing, "He is gone, and is now, I doubt not, reaping the reward of a faithful servant." During the first part of his sickness, although expecting death, he was calm and resigned. An overflowing crowd listened to the funeral sermon, by Rev. Dr. Morse of Charlestown, from Prov. xiv, 32, "The righteous hath hope in his death." Two hundred dollars were collected, "the Congregational ministers carrying around the boxes," at the funeral, for "the widow and her five small children," to which the congregation added, "the use of the house they had occupied for a few months." In her comparative poverty, her heart was stayed upon her husband's God,—her own "the widow's" God,—upon "the Father of the fatherless." She was spared ten years, in which to inculcate upon four sons and one daughter the great truths of salvation, teaching them also "to inherit the promises of God."

Mrs. Webster was the grand-daughter of that faithful pastor. It was thus her privilege to look back, both on the paternal and maternal side, to a pious ancestry, which had been blessed, in the last and preceding century also, to the church and the world. This fact was fully recognized in the developement of her intellectual, and spiritual character. She felt the responsibilities incurred by such a descent, more ennobling than the escutcheon of noble birth. She did not, however, regard the names of Russell and Gair as security for the fulfilment of promises

always based upon the fidelity of those in whom they are fulfilled. But she was cheered by the retrospect here presented. Nor is it a matter of doubt, with those who knew her worth, whether her own influence resembled that of the holy men whose names she bore.

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL DAYS.

A sea-captain residing in Providence, R. I., after a variety of adventures upon the ocean, relinquished that business and became a merchant. His little daughter Rebecca, then about six years old, was among the foremost of his children to rejoice at the change. Fear of his departure on long voyages, dread lest fatal accident should befal him in his absence, and anxious hopes of his speedy return had already begun to be her painful experience. It was his custom to afford an hour after tea every evening to his children, joining their innocent gambols, and living over again his eventful life while reciting its scenes in their hearing. All were eager to listen to these narratives. But one insinuated herself so cautiously and so constantly into her seat upon his knee that the place came to be regarded as hers by right. What she then heard was moulding her whole character. They who would appreciate that character must therefore condescend to notice, so far as they can be traced, these little rills of influence. Already indications of strength of character developed themselves. These received new coloring as she lis-

tened there, until these incipient tints became, in her subsequent career, vivid and beautiful in their expansion. More than a year before the great trunk in the entry,—her mother sobbing upon it,—the other children weeping by her side, and her own heaving bosom told of the hour of sailing. She summons a resolution which she alone of them all possessed, and endeavors to rally their spirits by the call, "Come, come, let us go and play with the tea-sets Pa gave us." It was at a still earlier period that she took great delight in reciting hymns. When that privilege was granted she would exult in being able to afford satisfaction to her parents and their friends. She steps out with the utmost solemnity, and looking up to the ceiling, lifts her little hands. It is not the half performed imitation of a still more awkward example. It is the untutored act of a little child, who seems to *feel* as she lisps, "Lord teach a little child to pray." Resolution and propriety were now to be modified upon her father's knee. This was to be effected by narratives like the following:—"Pa, now tell us our story will you?" "What will you have to-night, Rebecca?" "The dying baby, Pa."—"Our ship was about ready to sail from the Isle of France, when an English gentleman came on board in a shore boat, and wished to take passage, with his lady and their little infant. I told him that he could do so, and before long they came on board with their baggage. They wanted to get to New York, hoping to find a packet there for England. For some days they were well and happy. But after a while the child grew sick. There we were, off at sea. They could not get any doctor, nor much medicine, nor any nurse to help them tend it. And they could not keep the vessel still. The winds blew, and the waves tossed us up and down, and there were the father and

mother carrying the baby in their arms day and night, and doing all they could for it. It was a poor place for a little infant. It grew worse and worse. At last it died. Oh, how its mother wept. She still held it in her arms, and kissed its cold cheek. The next day we made a little coffin, and put some heavy shot in it at the foot to make it sink, and placed the infant's body in it. I had it placed on a plank which rested at one end on the side of the ship, while the sailors held up the other. Then I read the burial service,—the plank was raised up,—the baby in the coffin slid off into the water, and sank down, down out of sight. Poor mother. She would come, every day, and look at the water and weep,—just as people stand at the grave in the burying ground. Now good-night children." As parental love cast its usual glance upon the sleepers in the nursery that night, a tear, not yet dried, told of deep sympathy for the parents of the dying babe. At another time the death of a ship-mate of her father at Batavia, far from mother and sisters, called forth her tears. Again the successful endeavors of her father to set a broken limb at sea increased her interest in relieving sufferings. Her sense of the ridiculous, always so keen as to give her trouble in after life, found satisfaction in many of these adventures. She subsequently alluded, in that light, to her father's description of the efforts of a shark, attempting to swallow a chicken, which had flown overboard, but which escaped by the inability of the fish to endure the scratching by which the fowl assailed its mouth. Her mind was kept alive to thought, and her knowledge of language increased by these evening entertainments for several years. Deep affliction in the family several times led her to solemn reflection. She herself in childhood was long afflicted with dangerous sickness. But as she as-

sumed her place among the pupils of the Academy, health, gaiety, politeness, and exuberant good-nature rendered her the favorite of all. The clerk had in her, one day, at noon, a very liberal customer. She called for needles enough to supply her school-mates. Her father wondered at such an unprecedented call for the article in his own family. At evening he inquired, as a matter of curiosity, what great occasion was approaching to bring such a supply into use? "What needles?" "Those which you sent for by Rebecca at noon." "I did not send for any." "Oh no, papa, ma did not want them, I got them for myself." "Why, what *did* you want of them?" "To give to the girls." "She had no idea," she said, "that it was wrong." Her appearance began to awaken expectations of future usefulness as soon as she commenced attendance at the high school. She was scrupulously lady-like, and yet so full of humor that frolic seemed her element. At a singing-school, just as all were ready to begin the tune, a music-box began its loudest peal from among the girls' seats. All were astonished, some tried not to laugh, and others were full of glee. The foot of the teacher soon awed the school into silence, but failed to arrest the zeal of the box. On it rang till Davy Jones, or some other equally popular air had been performed through twice. Then followed, "Was that you?" "No sir." "You?" "No sir"—till most of the pupils had been questioned. Rebecca's foot meanwhile pressed upon that of the companion who had accidentally started the box,—and Rebecca's answer was so comically polite that even the teacher's temper was restored and the singing began again. But in her early youth she was no friend of domestic duties. Often her mother would assign her a task which was still undone when school-time came,—while the

happy glee of the group which were eager at the door "to go with Rebecca" checked the intended rebuke. "Perhaps she may be of some use in the store, upon an emergency." Her young gay heart was once beating behind the counter, while her father dined. A customer, a shrewd countrywoman, examined prints, and gloves, and hose, and thread to a considerable amount, and offering but a trifle for them all, was permitted to take them in perfect good-nature, and but for the father's timely return would have told at home of marvellously cheap purchases.

Mr. Dewitt placed her name on his list of "good girls," although he said, "She is one of the most playful in school." "Her elegantly refined drollery was often irresistible." "If *she* raised a school-laugh, teachers *had* to join it, and *could* join it without injury to dignity or order." She was apparently a stranger to serious thought. Her father had not felt it his duty to assemble his children around the family altar, excepting when clergymen shared his hospitality. Her mother, although religiously educated, and herself anxious for the conversion of her children, had not yet seen it best to keep them from fashionable amusements.

Rebecca was peculiarly interested in missionary intelligence. But the heroic element seemed its chief attraction to her. The fact of her father's intimacy with several American missionaries in India, gave her a high estimate of their noble disinterestedness. One of the stories to which her mind often reverted was the description of the grave of Harriet Newell, over which her father had wept with the bereaved husband of that devoted woman. She read the memoir of Mrs. N. with sympathetic interest. It doubtless led to serious belief in the value of piety. But religion was far from her thoughts. When. Rev. Mr.

Wilson, her pastor, smiled upon her as she passed, the smile returned was one of deferential respect. She loved him too much to refuse to comply with his request to read the Bible through in course. Yet even this must be done jovially. A *society* must be duly organized for the purpose, pledged to spend all the *recesses* in reading the Bible, till they should get through, and meanwhile there must be a contest to decide which should "do it up first." Day after day, in the entry, or the yard, the group were eyed with curiosity by their sporting companions, as they sat reading the Bible, each at utmost speed, till at last the originator of the project came off victor. She had beat them all, fulfilled her promise to Mr. Wilson, and "had a fine time."

Her teachers can none of them recal any thing in her which induces painful thought. They have a most vivid remembrance of her "always smiling as she came in," "her remarkable simplicity and frankness," "her quickness of apprehension," and "her popularity with her mates." "She had a decided choice of associates, and all knew it. Yet none were angry, nor envious, nor suspicious of her." "It was apparently a privilege to be intimate, but too much a privilege to be with her to be lost by resenting her preference for others." "She never liked Latin," "was not over fond of grammar, thought more of geography, and loved arithmetic." She excelled in calculating numbers, often through life anticipating, by her instant result, the answer of the cyphering salesman. Perhaps the most irksome task of that day was "learning all the Assembly's Catechism," which, however, was in after life "one of her pleasantest recollections." She excelled also in telling stories. "It was a happy noon for us, little ones, when Rebecca was obliged by a storm to stay with

"Her original song."—Chastisement.—Composition.

us. Once she made us all promise 'to be very still and very sober, and not to tell any body.' Then she began a long statement about a song which she should soon sing, if we would only keep still. Expectation rose to its highest point. It would be such a song as we had never, *never* heard. We should never hear it again, no—not if we should live always. Nobody but her ever had sung it. What could it be? When the hour of intermission had been almost taken up in fearful suspense of anticipation, she sprang towards us with a wild 'Oh! oh! oh!' which sent us scattering in every direction,—and sure enough, it was a song which filled us with terror then, and mirth since, such as none of us will ever forget. We looked at her all the afternoon with wonder She had charmed us by her tones and looks,—frightened us,—and we had hardly eaten our dinners."

She was chastised *twice* in her early childhood. Once she came home with red and swollen wrists. The teacher had loosely tied her hands before her for not getting her lessons, and she had wrung her hands and rubbed her wrists red in sport, "so as to help punish them." Some wicked play-mates taught her an improper expression, which was followed by punishment. "She did not deserve it, it ought to be given to the girls who told her." She was beloved and respected, rarely censured.

"In one department she excelled all her mates, viz. in composition." Some of these performances exhibit an unusual maturity of thought, and penmanship of remarkable beauty. Hope marked childhood and school-days, while her levity and heedlessness awakened many fears.

Cotillon parties.—Fondness for whist and cards.

CHAPTER II.

CONVERSION, AND COMMENCEMENT OF RELIGIOUS LIFE.

Her parents, although members of the Beneficent Congregational Church in Providence, fell in with the then fashionable custom of permitting their daughters to acquire a taste for dancing. Rebecca was in her element at the Assembly-room. She was naturally calculated to attract attention where the charms of personal beauty and elegance of manners, and refined and ready wit are each, even when found alone, permitted to reign; and where their combined power is almost worshipped by the fashionably gay. She indulged herself in these scenes too far for her frail constitution. But no signs of evil consequences had appeared when she finally relinquished them. From her first appearance in a cotilion, she was harassed with invitations to balls, and rarely declined them. She was met in the "light fantastic dance" three and four times per week through the season. Youthful gaiety could listen to no refusal. She came to be regarded as an inseparable companion of these vain amusements. Dignified, yet affable, conscious of her power of pleasing, and equally delighted to impart delight; graceful and simple in her movements, she led many a mazy round, through all the intricacies of the most complex figure as though she knew it not. Her smile enlivened all. When exhaustion led her to seek an interval of rest, she was equally at home with whist and cards. There was an attractive style in her conversation which always drew around her a happy

circle. On one occasion there seemed no time to stop till the clock struck four, when it was discovered that an almost impassable depth of snow must be ploughed in their passage home.

She was a constant attendant at meeting on the Sabbath, for this was her parents' desire. Her own choice, formed in view of the attractions of youthful society, led her to Sabbath evening meetings. She was a Sabbath school scholar also, though not particularly interested in this employment. Her whole heart was bent on trifling amusements,—more congenial to one whose "fascinating modesty," though it had secured the title even in print of "lily of the valley," shrunk from the exposure of attendance at a prayer-meeting.

The winter of 1828—9 was over. On the 19th of April, at the close of the afternoon service, Rev. James Wilson read the following announcement among others of a similar kind: "Miss Rebecca G. Russell, being desirous of professing her faith in Christ, is propounded for admission to this church." It created great sensation. Numbers were filled with astonishment. All eyes fell upon her, as she covered her face in her father's pew. We are not left to conjecture as to what was passing in her mind at that instant. One then attending the Union Academy states: "She called the girls around her, on the next day, and told us of the mercy of Christ. She said, 'While there in church, I seemed to see a book opened before me, in which were written all my sins. They seemed to be very numerous and aggravated. I prayed, Oh Saviour keep me from going back, make me holy. While I looked and prayed, the hand of the Saviour seemed to be extended, and to wipe them out,—and not a stain was left.'"

The following extracts from a letter portray the steps which led to that wish to profess Christ. It was addressed to one who had been faithful in urging her to turn from vain amusements to the service of the Lord.

"*Nov.* 1, 1830.

VERY DEAR FRIEND,—With pleasure I resume my pen, for the purpose of communicating a few lines to one whom I so highly esteem. I often think of you with the fondest affection, and regret that the distance of a few miles deprives me of the privilege of seeing you. I will not ask what shall be my theme. It shall be that which alone can support us in life, in death, and through eternity. Perhaps it may not be uninteresting for me to give you some account relative to my Christian experience. When you were here I was somewhat seriously impressed with the importance of divine truth, yet my stubborn heart would not bow to the mild sceptre of King Jesus. I was fully aware that, should I become a disciple of the Lord Jesus I must suffer persecution, and for that reason I remained a long time in an undecided state. In Jan. 1829, I commenced attending evening meetings, which at that time were considered peculiarly interesting; yet I did not enjoy them owing to the state of mind which I was in. About the 1st of March, I felt myself to be a lost and undone sinner, and expected pardon only through the merits of a crucified Redeemer. I often had conversation with Christians on this all-important subject, but all they could do for me was to point me to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. I knew of several who were seeking the Saviour at that time, and when I found that I was to be accompanied by my sister E., in this blessed way, I set out with increased vigor to find him of whom

Little distress of mind.—"Rude and ungovernable disposition."

Moses and the prophets did write. I feel very grateful to you, dear friend, for the kind advice I received from you when you were here, and I hope you will accept my thanks, as I shall be unable to repay you in any other way. About three weeks I remained in such a frame of mind, as to enjoy neither one thing nor another, yet I do not think I ever felt that deep distress of mind of which many speak. On the evening of the eighth day of April, after having attended a committee meeting for experiences, as I looked around me, every thing appeared differently, and seemed to be praising the Creator. The day following these words came to my mind, 'You may *know* that you have passed from death unto life if you love the brethren.' These words were the means of encouraging me very much, as I felt assured that I truly loved the children of God. For some time I remained in a very happy frame of mind. I felt it my duty to renounce the world and its vanities, and openly profess my faith in the Lord Jesus. On the 27th of April, I related to the church what God had done for my soul. On the 29th, received the solemn ordinance of baptism, by immersion, and on the 3d of May, I, together with seven others, was admitted, as a member of the church of Christ, and for the first time sat at the table of the Lord, to commemorate his death and sufferings. I have done it in the vigor and prime of my age. Never, as yet, have I had cause to regret that I so early gave my heart to God. There is sometimes a great deal of levity in my manners, and often, when I have indulged in it, I am cut to the heart. Such solemn scenes are before us, that it seems a wonder any can be gay; but being naturally possessed of so rude and ungovernable a disposition, I sometimes find it difficult to keep within proper bounds. May I ask your prayers,

Crowd at baptizing at Eddy's Point.

that I may hold out to the end,—that I may be faithful in my Master's service,—that I may hear the blessed plaudit of 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.'

Accept this from your friend, R."

On the 29th of April, 1829, a crowd began to collect on the shore around Eddy's Point, at a little after four o'clock in the afternoon. It gradually increased to a multitude. Boats began to push out, loaded with people, and to moor in a circle in the stream. At last the hour of five struck. The throng opens, and the venerable Wilson advances, with his white locks uncovered, till he stands close by the water's edge. Before him are a widow, with her sister, and two young sisters who not only closely resemble each other in countenance, but are both robed in white. Aged Christians, young disciples, the anxious, the thoughtful, and crowds of the thoughtless and gay, look on with varied emotions. The warblers of the spring are vieing with each other in their sweetest notes on the neighboring shade-trees. A spectator whispers to his comrade, "Are those the Miss Russells? Can it be? Is that Rebecca? She was a few weeks ago leading the dance. Are amusements then renounced by *her?*" Hush, they are singing.

"Vain delusive world adieu,
With all of creature good,
Only Jesus will I know,
Who bought me with his blood."

One after the other they receive the outward seal of their faith. As the last of their number is plunged beneath the wave, a step starts from the crowd, in instinctive fear lest the pastor's trembling arm should fail to sustain its frail burden. Music again fills the air with

"The voice of free grace cries escape to the mountain."

First religious impressions.

An eye-witness of the scene writes, in 1846, "How visible to memory's eye is the slight and delicate figure of the younger sister, her fair form radiant with the new sensations of Christian hope and joy,—her timid step guided by her aged pastor, whose ever-speaking face seemed illumined by no common joy." Among other reasons, "she chose to be baptized there, that she might the more publicly renounce the world." She "wished to have an opportunity to do it before all her former companions in sinful pleasure." It was granted her, for rarely was such an assembly of gay youth called out upon such an occasion.

Other accounts of her early interest in religion mention that, on Jan. 31, 1829, she attended a baptizing on "Point Pleasant," baptism administered by Rev. Mr. Church, pastor of 2d Baptist Church. There were three candidates. While there she "had some serious impressions, but they were momentary." She "returned home, and wore a serious countenance that day." She went that evening to a Sabbath evening conference, and found it very solemn. Feb. 7th, she was again affected at meeting. On the 11th, she excited some surprise by going to a female prayer-meeting. Rev. Mr. Waterman's "eye rested upon her that evening for the first time at his Bible meeting." The 19th, brought her an invitation to the Sabbath school teachers' meeting, to which she went. On repeating her attendance, a friend conversed with her respecting her soul,—and when there the third time, she was asked, "if she had decided upon the important question of serving God?" She replied, "Pretty much." On the 23d, she formed new resolutions in regard to her soul. March 8th, she accepted an invitation to teach a class of children in the Sabbath school. On Monday, March 19, Rev. Mr. Wilson "was surprised to see *Rebecca* at his inquiry meet-

ing in Ship Street,"—and on the 23d and 30th, he met her again with the inquirers. On the 8th of April, she "felt differently,"—"all around appeared pleasant." She could "not tell the cause of it." April 9th, she "felt perfectly calm all day." April 11th. In a walk with a young lady of her acquaintance, she told the state of her feelings freely. April 15th, she told Mr. Wilson of her wish, openly to profess religion.

In conversation with her parents, her mother expressed fear lest one so young should "give it up, and dishonor Christ." But Rebecca was in earnest. She did not ask, what *others* would think, or say, or do. She read, "This do in remembrance of me," and she wished "to obey her new Master."

Although she "preferred to take the most public method of letting her gay companions know her decision, to renounce the fascinations of sinful amusements,"—still they were loth to believe that she was really in earnest. The versatility and levity of her previous mental developments occasioned in many others the same fears which her mother had expressed. But no inducement could divert her attention from her new responsibilities. Scenes of pleasure were deserted. She was constant at religious meetings. She felt great rejoicing at the conversion of several of her young companions. On July 7th, she joined her associates in a weekly prayer-meeting, which she continued to enjoy during her residence at home, for nine years.

We know but little of her religious history during the remainder of the year. But in 1830, on July 12th, she wrote:—"This day commences a new year with me. I have now arrived at the age of sixteen, and hope, through the mercy of God, to spend the year more devotedly to his service, to have my affections weaned from all things

Result of omitting usual devotions.

earthly, and placed on Jesus, and on him alone. I desire that my conversation may not be light and trifling, but may ever be on religious subjects, especially when I associate with the worldly. I desire to improve every opportunity that I have in conversing with my young acquaintances upon the great, all-important subject of religion; to endeavor to impress their minds with the importance of giving their hearts to God in early life." She was anxious to be filled with love to Christ, and wrote that "without the cross," she expected "no crown." Her opportunities of secret and social prayer were "unusually delightful on this her birth-day."

The duty of daily, regular, and earnest, secret prayer began to be appreciated about this time as never before, and she "resolved to act on this subject in accordance with her convictions." Feeling rather dejected, she one day "found the cause in having omitted usual communion with God." She hastened to her closet, and soon returned happy in the light of God's countenance. The conversion of a companion with whom she had been faithful, filled her with rapture, and "encouraged her to plead for Jesus." She was tempted, however, "in consequence of being busied in domestic affairs," to spend less time in devotions, and to be absent from "the prayer-meeting which closed the week," and thus describes the result:—"I did not enjoy the sacramental feast as I wished to. I am too cold to enjoy any thing. In the past week I have thought I did not enjoy any thing whatever; but I think I have a desire to become more devoted to God, and live more to his glory." She visited three of her young friends who were sick, and "rejoiced to find them submissive to God." She wrote of a prayer-meeting:—"Only four met to pray to God, to invoke his special blessing on us." Yet on the

Views of "prayer as a means of grace."

same page, she cheers rising despondency with the query, "but are there not many who desire his blessing, who ask not for it with us?" Her desire for the conversion of souls increased week by week. She "had a very pleasant time with her scholars in the Sabbath school, and they appeared somewhat interested." She plead before God, "that she might be more faithful in her Master's cause, more zealous to win souls to Jesus." She wrote also,—"I wish to be in the valley of humiliation, to have my affections weaned from every attachment to this world." And again,—"I desire to have no will of my own, but to rely on God, and trust him in all that I do." She was "very anxious for the conversion of her dear friend ——, verily believing that God is about to make known to her the error of her ways, and show her her own heart."

Thus she went on from strength to strength, in her efforts to grow in grace. Such efforts grew more and more zealous, and began, about Aug. 1, 1830, to be based upon a clear perception of the "value of *prayer* as a *means* of grace." It was at this time evident to all her associates, that she became "more spiritually-minded in her conversation." She was "noticed to take more time to be by herself." Although still volatile and humorous, and full of hilarity at times, yet she would oftener check the gush of mirth, and "without incivility, in her own winning manner, gradually transfer thought to God and the soul."

CHAPTER III.

COMMENCEMENT OF CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY.

On the evening of the 7th of Aug. 1830, an aged Christian, apparently near her end, was told, by her attendant, that a young lady had called to see her; and after a short interview, the dying sufferer began to speak with much satisfaction of the pleasure the call had imparted. This satisfaction was often referred to with peculiar interest till her spirit took its flight. The young visitor cheered that aged sister in Christ, with thoughts "of the comfort, and of the duty of reconciliation to the will of so kind a father in Heaven." After they parted, the wish was expressed, "that all other youth might be prepared for death, as Rebecca seemed to be."

The next day she was "greatly interested in hearing Rev. Dr. Skinner preach, in reference to the utility of sending missionaries to the Valley of the Mississippi, for the establishment of Sabbath schools." She became deeply interested in the "measures which were taken to aid this object," but "felt dejected," in view of her want of faith. She wrote, "I have approached my God oftener than I have been wont to do." Impressions of the importance of Christian efforts for the destitute at the West, led her to pray much for their success. She spoke of herself as "too unworthy to claim Christians as her brethren and sisters. Oh that I might be as faithful as the least of them. Our aged venerable brethren still hold out faithful in their Master's cause. They have long labored in his

Long walk to a prayer-meeting.

service, and are not yet weary. And I who have been but a short time in his service, am too cold and lukewarm. The passage 'I would that ye were either cold or hot,' often occurs to me." With such feelings, at the evening prayer-meeting, when her pastor and the deacons prayed, and exhorted to greater activity—she found it "a most excellent meeting, a profitable season. God was there; his spirit influenced the hearts of his people. Oh that I might be more faithful than I have been. Oh that we might have a revival of God's goodness and divine grace in this town." Wishing to renew the joy of social praise, she was at the appointed place for the next female prayer-meeting; she waited; she was alone; she left alone; but "visited two of our aged sisters, and enjoyed the visit much."

The next evening was introduced by the call of two neighbors. A distant prayer-meeting being incidentally mentioned, she joins them in attending. "The walk was very long, but we were amply paid for going," was her notice of the meeting. Always actively engaged before her conversion, the same activity impelled her still, but in a different career.

> Now "weary of the crowded hall, and weary of its mirth,
> She sought to lift herself above the grosser thinks of earth."

It was cheering to see her always at her post of duty, for her enjoyment was there. The smile of her countenance told how much she prized the words of pious counsel, and the song of Zion in the praying circle. Her alacrity, when an act of sympathy was called for, made it delightful to ask her aid, or to mention to her objects of charity. That she might do good to her class in the Sabbath school, she at this time was very patient in studying the lessons, and in reading such thoughts as the "Christian Father's Present" afforded.

"Wrongfully accused."—Prayer, as an act of charity.

She was sometimes compelled to "suffer persecution, by being wrongfully accused of things of which she was not guilty," such as would naturally be ascribed to a devoted Christian by the gay opposer of piety. One morning she glanced her "eye over a few religious tracts." They aroused her to a sense of her duty, and led to the confession,—"I find that many times when I have retired for prayer, it has been because I felt it a duty to pray, when my heart has been elsewhere. When I attempt to peruse the Scriptures of Divine truth, it has been on account of my feeling it to be my duty; but I desire to be rid of such feelings, and to feel these acts to be most delightful. A few days since I formed a resolution, that four times in the day I would retire for prayer. I have not been able to do this more than three days, because I have been so indifferent to Christ's cause." These last sentences explain one secret of her advances in grace.

She had been more than usually impressed with the "value of prayer as an assistance to other efforts." Accordingly, she from this time, when her sympathies were awakened for distress, hastened to her closet, as others would hasten to do something else. She seemed to feel that prayer was "the best help she could render." It was in reference to this conviction, and in view of a degree of neglect of secret communion with God, that she expressed herself, "Oh that I could be more faithful in this blessed cause; that I could honor and adorn my profession with meekness and humility. May I count all things but dross in comparison with Christ. I am determined to press forward, to endeavor to win the prize, that I may come off conqueror through him who hath loved me and given himself for me."

Continued attractiveness of society.—Pilgrim at Constantinople.

At times the same circles which were once delighted with her society, and equally her delight, would renew their solicitations for her companionship. And this was sometimes done in a way which seemed to render acquiescence right. "Who could object to social intercourse? Visitors are not responsible for the admission of vain amusements by their host, if they do not see fit to join them." But she was not lured by such attractions from convictions of duty. When she firmly, yet affectionately, declined these invitations of former associates,

> She "spake in very bitterness, for she had deeply felt
> The mockery of the hollow shrine at which she once had knelt."

And with an extasy of joy at resisted temptation, she could add,—

> "Away, I will not fetter thus the spirit God hath given,
> Nor stoop that pinion back to earth which beareth up to heaven."

This slight attractiveness of such scenes, although spurned, was yet painful. She was led, in view of it, to say, "May I have that love which I once had for Christ. When I first espoused this blessed cause, I would willingly do any thing for Christ. I looked upon this world as being under my feet. I thought I should ever have such feelings; and I tremble when I think that I am so much conformed to the world,—that I no more value the religion of Jesus."

It was after an unusual opportunity to enjoy the society of refined, but worldly friends, that she copied for her future use the following extract:—"It is recorded of a pilgrim, on his way to Jerusalem, that in passing through Constantinople, when that city was in its glory, he met with a friend, who, wishing to detain him in the eastern metropolis, took him about to see the beauties of that celebrated place. 'Very splendid,' exclaimed the pilgrim,

'but this is not the holy city.' So should we say to every thing that would limit and detain our hearts on earth, 'Very good in its place, but this is not salvation.'" "Oh that I were enabled to adopt this language of the pilgrim, and I should be much happier passing through this vale of tears, than I should be continuing on a half-way Christian. I think I truly desire to be a real Christian, and not a half-way one."

During a visit at Boston, at this time, she did not find religious things constantly on her mind; but on her return, she was first attracted by her accustomed efforts for the good of souls. The account of three conversions was the occasion of her writing, "Why are Christian experiences so interesting to us? Because they are similar to what we have experienced ourselves."

As a specimen of the many appeals which she made this year to her young companions, the following is selected;—

"Could you realize, dear ——, the vast importance of your immortal soul, you would no longer remain in such a state as you are now in. You are now without hope and without God in the world, a stranger to him who bought you with his blood, and who 'died the just for the unjust, that you through him might be an heir of salvation.' And can you refuse to *love* him who *first loved you?* Can you continue in sin while grace abounds? Oh ——, I pray you, be persuaded to seek an interest in this blessed Saviour, to give your heart to him now in youth. Never will you have a better opportunity to seek the Saviour, and you ought therefore to improve the present. I beseech you, as a lover of your soul, to neglect this Saviour no longer, but embrace him while an opportunity lasts.

Put your trust in him, and he will deliver you in time of trouble. Accept these few lines from your unworthy friend, whose greatest desire for you is to see you a decided follower of Christ.

Yours, R."

Many such mementoes of her zeal survive her, none of them more touching than those prompted by affection for an absent brother of whom she wrote,—"I do feel deeply the importance of his soul's salvation, and oh that he could feel it himself. Oh how rejoicing would it be to hear that my oldest and beloved brother had found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write. It would encourage me to continue in the Christian race, to fight until I obtained a crown."

Her great anxiety for the conversion of the children of her Sabbath-school class, led them at times to serious thought, and such indications gave her more joy than all her former gaiety had done. Her interest in that class was so great, that during the visit at Boston above alluded to, she was constantly recurring to it, notwithstanding her gratification at the new scenes around her. Her "attendance upon the Roman Catholic service, their singular ceremonies; the sprinkling of the numerous congregation; the sermon, which was an effort to pervert the passage, 'From henceforth all nations shall call me blessed,' into proof of Mary's title to worship; the chanting in Latin; the strangeness of the fact, that people of this age should be so superstitious,"—could not shut out from her mind "the loss of the privilege of teaching her class."

Sept. 24, brought letters from her brother at sea. While reading them over she was overcome by the statement, that "after he had been out a few days, as he was

Letter concealed in her brother's chest on his going to sea.

overhauling his chest, he found a letter from Rebecca," and "frequently read it." Now that both the writer and he to whom she wrote have gone from earth, that letter will be read with increased interest. It was as follows:—

"AFFECTIONATE AND WELL BELOVED BROTHER,—The time has nearly arrived when you will bid adieu to your native land. May we not part to meet no more, but may we meet where parting is unknown, at the right hand of king Jesus. May we each hear the sweet sentence, 'Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.' May we also hear him say to us, 'Enter into the joy of thy Lord.' I have several requests to make. One is, hear the words of Solomon in the Proverbs, 1st chap., 10th verse, 'If sinners entice thee consent thou not.' Another is, give God your heart. Remember 'the love the Father has bestowed upon you, in giving his only begotton Son to die the just for the unjust.' Christ suffered even unto death for you. He even suffered the agonizing death of the cross, spilled his most precious blood for your sins, and after enduring these pains and suffering death, he rose from the dead, and ascended to his father, and is now constantly interceding for his people. Oh the unbounded love that was bestowed upon us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Do you not realize the importance, the value, together with the danger of the soul? Do you not feel the danger of neglecting to seek salvation? Do you not feel that now is the accepted time? Do you not feel that prayer is a necessary duty which *you* should *perform?* Do you not feel that the word of God should be *daily* perused? Do you not realize your sinfulness in the sight of God, and that without repentance, and faith in Christ Jesus, you will experience everlasting

misery? Have you not a desire to possess the religion which will support you in troubles, trials, afflictions of every sort, and, above all, will support you in a dying hour? Do you not feel the danger of living without God, without hope in the world? If you can answer all these questions in the affirmative, I will, with cheerfulness, recommend you to the throne of grace, where you can pour forth your soul freely to the Lord God of Hosts. Oh, dear William, what joy it would cause your parents, together with your sister, if we could all see you serving Jesus Christ; if we could see you humbly bowing to the mild sceptre of King Jesus.——You are soon to leave us, and will doubtless be from home a year or more. I would therefore beg you to read this letter often, at your leisure. In it you will see the hand-writing of your sister. In it you will see the requests I have made. By it you will perceive that your sister feels a deep interest in your spiritual and eternal welfare. You will see that I desire you to seek and to serve that God who *omnipotently reigneth*. When you return, may it be with an humble desire of serving your Creator. On your passage, don't forget me, and above all don't forget your Saviour, but seek him and serve him now in the days of your youth.

I remain your affectionate sister till the chilling hand of death shall separate us. R. G. RUSSELL."

"P. S. Should we never again meet in this world, remember my last request, which is, 'Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.

R. G. R."

When she found that this appeal had awakened serious interest, she wrote,—"May I trust in God, knowing that he alone can change the hearts of his children; but I de-

sire to wait patiently till God awakens and converts him. I have recently heard of the conversion of a cousin. He has long been seriously impressed with the importance of divine truth. At the time of Wm. Stillwell's death (by drowning,) he became serious, and I heard on Wednesday of his conversion. I have had no conversation with him as yet. I hope he remains firm and unshaken. I delight in hearing of the conversion of any one, much more of one who is related to me by the ties of consanguinity." She was, at this time, much tried to find herself inclined to "judge of others unjustly," and resolved "to think twice before speaking," that nothing might be spoken "inconsiderately of any one."

When "unable to attend meeting, on a very stormy Sabbath, (something very unusual)," she succeeded in rendering "the day profitable by secret worship." She also rejoiced "in being able to say, of a preparatory lecture, nothing of a worldly nature interrupted me, or called off my attention. How I wish I could always attend meeting without having worldly things discompose my mind. I never enjoyed a meeting more. My heart was engaged, and all appeared nearer and dearer to me than ever. Oh that I could always have such a frame of mind."—She wrote, "I have enjoyed much of God's presence," on the following day,—and on the following Sabbath, found her Sabbath-school class "attentive in an unusual degree. The time seemed shorter than usual. This I think is better than to have the time drag heavily. We have reason to rejoice, that three more have renounced the vanities of the world, and enlisted under the banner of Christ." In a social visit, "with a few young Christians, there was too little spiritual-mindedness for much enjoyment."

Frequently she was by the side of the sick, often in the abode of misery, constantly present in her place at the Sabbath school and teacher's meeting. And for all these she *prayed* continually. It was a happy beginning of her Christian activity, to commence in *the right place—the closet.*

CHAPTER IV.

SKETCH OF MRS. WEBSTER AS A SABBATH-SCHOOL TEACHER.

THERE is a sameness in the details of the most checkered life which often renders biography tedious. The past records of "Childhood and school-days," of the "Commencement of religious life," and "of Christian activity," have given a pretty accurate idea of Mrs. Webster's early habits and feelings. And these continued almost unchanged till her death, such uniformity being secured, in part, at least, by the peculiar firmness of her resolution. She regularly minuted changes in her employment, day by day, till within a few weeks of her death. She uniformly pursued the same plans of usefulness which have been already portrayed. Yet there was a very large amount of miscellany, and of thrilling incident, and of energy, in her subsequent career. A better view of her after life will be obtained by detailed statements of particular pursuits, than in a progressive history.

Appearance in her class to a stranger.—Power over minds.

As a teacher in the Sabbath-school, Mrs. Webster's course was original, and successful. An entire stranger to her character and name, once visited her Sabbath-school, on a transient residence in the city. Almost as soon as he entered, his "eye was directed to the intense interest beaming on the countenances of a class of from ten to twenty young ladies. Some were in tears; all were solemn; all looked immovably upon their teacher's face. When the exercises closed, they went silently away, as if in overwhelming thought." The next Sabbath led him to visit that school again, "prompted by curiosity and interest in the appearance of that class. One by one the group of girls came in, with all the hilarity usual at their age. Their teacher joined them, and her entrance did not seem to check their cheerfulness. She seemed cheerful also. The lessons began. Smiles still lingered on their lips. But soon wrapt thought began to settle on their features. One by one they developed emotion. At last a tear fell; others followed. It was as on the last Sabbath." Some circumstances having called the attention of the teacher towards the pulpit, near which the stranger sat, he perceived that "her countenance was as cheerful as ever. And yet the class seemed uninterested in the remarks the superintendent was making. They were intent in thought, impatient of interruption, and their sudden gleam of joy as their teacher turned again towards them, told of almost unprecedented power over their minds." The following letters, written about this time, explains the secret of this power.

"MY VERY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—God having been pleased to place you under my charge in the Sabbath school, and as you are now about to leave for a short sea-

son, I will address a few lines to you, which, if it is not too much trouble, I should like to have you take with you, that you may occasionally be reminded of your *teacher*. I have endeavored, my dear Mary, to impress your young and tender mind with the importance of seeking your soul's salvation, while in the vigor of youth. Should you now become a child of God, you would never have occasion to regret it, but, on the contrary, your life would be rendered much happier, your death joyful, and your entrance upon eternity blessed. The anxiety I feel for you, dear girl, is inexpressible. I long to see you on the Lord's side. 'Now in the heat of youthful blood, remember your creator God.' A very blessed promise is made to those who seek Christ in youth. 'I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me.' It 'will,' also, 'save you from a thousand snares to mind religion young.' Come then to Jesus. He alone can do you good. He is waiting to save you. He calls, and bids you come. Oh, dear Mary, give your heart to Jesus. 'Twas for you he *died*. And will you not return his kindness, and give him your wicked sinful heart? Pray to him that you may have a new heart, and that your name may be enrolled in the Lamb's book of life. If you repent, and become converted, there will be joy among the angels of God over you. Delay no longer. Delay is dangerous. Mary, 'Are you still secure. Will you still refuse to pray. Can your heart and hand endure, in the Lord's avenging day?' Perhaps you think you are too young to become a Christian. But, I would ask, are you too young to die? Then you are not too young to seek to be prepared. Embrace the present opportunity. Wait no longer, but *now* commence seeking your soul's salvation. When you are absent, dear Mary, remember both your teacher and your

class-mates. And when you raise your heart to God in silent prayer, oh remember us. Pray for us, and be assured you shall have our prayers.

'May you now this day improve,
Listen to a Saviour's voice,
Seek the things that are above,
Scorn the world's pretended joys.'

It is with regret that I part with you, but I hope, when you return, should my life be spared, that I may again have the privilege of teaching you, in my feeble way, on the important subject of religion. But, perhaps, ere you return, my body may be laid in the cold and silent grave. If then, dear Mary, we never again meet in this world, I would say to you, and perhaps they are my dying words, Seek the salvation of your immortal soul. In your absence it will afford me pleasure to receive a letter from you, and I will do myself the pleasure of answering it. I must now close, praying that almighty God may grant the influences of his spirit upon your heart, and make you his accepted follower. May you ever live to his glory.

Accept this from your unworthy teacher,

R. G. R."

"It is peculiarly pleasing to me, dear E., to have an opportunity of writing to one who, I hope, is anxious to secure the salvation of her immortal soul. Since I ascertained you were inquiring 'the way to be saved,' I have felt a very deep interest in your spiritual welfare. Although I have said but little to you on the subject, yet I have felt for you, and often carried your case to Almighty God. Having myself experienced what I presume *you now feel*, I will, for your encouragement, say a few words which, through the blessing of God, I hope, will be the

means of doing some good. Do you feel that you are a lost sinner, and that unless you *repent* you *must perish?* Do you feel that Christ is *ready*, *willing*, *able*, and even *waiting* to save you? If so, why not come, just as you are, to him? Do not wait until you are better; but come just as you are.

'If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.'

Do you feel that Jesus died for *you?* *And* did he not die for *your sins?* Unless you submit yourself and all you have, unreservedly, to Jesus, you cannot expect to find peace and pardon. Oh, then, dear friend, go to Jesus, he alone can do *helpless sinners* good. What is there which you are unwilling to give up for Christ? Perhaps you are unwilling your own family should know you are anxious to be on the Lord's side. Don't be ashamed of it, for Christ says, 'Whosoever is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and his holy angels.'

'Ashamed of Jesus, yes you may
When you've no sins to wash away,
No tears to wipe, no good to crave,
No fears to quell, no *soul* to *save*.'

Then, dear Elizabeth, persevere. Press forward, and you will assuredly find Jesus. 'The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, he will not, he cannot desert to his foes.' Do entreat our dear friend Louisa to follow you, to go heart and hand with you to the kingdom of heaven. Tell her that now is the accepted time, and while the waters are troubled to put in for a share. Tell her you cannot bear to leave her seeking happiness where it is not to be found, when she knows Jesus is ready to save her. Improve the first opportunity to answer this. Tell your feelings to me, as a friend, and believe me to be,

Yours, affectionately, R. G. R."

World's vanities tried.—"For what would you sell your soul?"

"DEAR LOUISA,—Agreeably to promise I will write you a few lines this afternoon. I have just written to E., and am indulging a hope that you now feel more than you have felt for some time past. I hope this letter will not prove unprofitable. I do believe, dear L., that the spirit of God is now striving with you, and it may be the last time he will ever strive with you. God has said, 'My spirit shall not always strive with man.' You have often grieved the Holy Spirit, but I beseech you, dear Louisa, not to grieve him at this time, but *resolve*, and *reresolve*, that you will seek happiness in the world to come. You have *tried* this world and its vanities. Have you found substantial happiness in it? I know you will say you have not. Oh L., the interest I feel for you. I long to see you a follower of Christ. I want you to accompany me to the kingdom of heaven. I need not tell you I love you, you already know it. But how much more should I love you if you were a Christian, and could join with me in Christian duties. Oh the warnings you have had. Flee from the wrath to come. Do you not feel you need a Saviour? And why not love the Saviour now? While the waters are troubled, step in and be healed. You will never have a more convenient season to repent. Your worldly cares are increasing *rather* than diminishing. You have many sins to repent of, and the longer you delay, the more there will be added to what you have already committed. Oh, delay no longer, for 'Procrastination is the thief of' *souls*. Is not *your* soul valuable? For what will you sell it? The worth of it will exceed that of the whole world. Then, if it is valuable, why not secure its salvation? Then, if you do feel anxious about your soul, press forward. Be not ashamed of it. True, you must expect the sneers of the world, but what do you care for that? To have the ap-

probation of your God is worth far more than that of the world. Be persuaded to follow Christ, and you will be happy here and hereafter. Being in haste, I must close here, praying that you may become a child of God.

Yours, &c. R. G. R."

Eighteen days after the above was written, she wrote the following to the same young friend.

"DEAR LOUISA,—What could have rejoiced my heart more than to hear that you have embraced Christ? That you have renounced the vanities of the world, and chosen Christ as your best friend? I have, for some time past, observed that you were apparently anxious for the concerns of your soul, but feared to converse with you, lest I should unintentionally throw some stumbling-block in your way. But now, as I have learned, you say that you have submitted yourself to your Saviour, and felt the hope that your sins are forgiven, I feel it both a duty and pleasure to write to you. I felt as happy, dear L., to hear that *you* had experienced the light of God's reconciled countenance, as I should to have heard that of any with whom I am acquainted. I cannot realize, dear L., that you have become a child of God; that you have forsaken the *world* with *all* its allurements, and determined to follow your Redeemer. I would say to you, persevere, be not discouraged. Ever be faithful in the blessed cause which you have espoused, and endeavor so to live, that when time with you shall be no more, you may have an *abundant* entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. You have very frequently seen me indulge in levity, (which I very much fear is one of my most besetting sins,) and perhaps you have been ready to think that

I am far from the *enjoyment* of *religion*. But, Louisa, it is something which I cannot help. I often strive against it, but Satan has suggested to me, 'there is no harm in it,' and I have often yielded to him. But *now* I think very differently, and am fully convinced that it is very wrong for Christians to indulge in it. I hope you may be able to overcome it, dear Louisa, as well as every thing else injurious to Christians. Perhaps I may have been a great stumbling block to you many times. If so, I hope you will forgive me. May I never again be the means of stumbling to any in this blessed cause. I hope you may be enabled to fight manfully the good fight of faith, through him who has loved you and given himself for you. The *oftener* you *pray*, the more you will enjoy the presence of God. According to your promise, I shall expect a letter from you very soon. Give me an account of your first serious impressions, and how you got along before you found Christ, and you will much oblige,

Your friend, R. G. R."

She wrote of her class, "I think I feel an increasing love to the Sabbath school, and to the dear class committed to my charge. I am confident that I do not realize the responsibility of my station as I ought; yet frequently Satan suggests to me that I am wholly incapable of teaching them, and I must not attempt it. But I intend, so long as I am connected with the school, to do what I know to be my duty, in order to induce them to seek an interest in the things pertaining to the kingdom, and leave the rest with God, who alone can move their hearts. They appear attentive in school, and I *do* sincerely hope that I, feeble as I am, may be made instrumental of winning them to Jesus, now while they are in 'the heat of youthful

blood.'"—She was soon after "permitted to hear" the same "Elizabeth and Louisa" to whom the above letters were addressed, "propounded for admission to the church." She "felt to say, bless God, oh my soul, for the work he has done. May they be steadfast, and be confirmed, and grow in grace."

Her class, with several others, met one evening to listen to remarks from "Mr. Crawford, General Agent of R. I. Sabbath-school Union. He first addressed them collectively, and made very solemn remarks, and afterwards addressed them personally. He was very affectionate and solemn, and each scholar was obliged to weep."

These letters and notices afford a just view of her efforts as a teacher in the Sabbath-school. Although a volume might be filled with similar examples, these selected with care from them all, are doubtless sufficient. She was a *student* of the Bible while a Sabbath-school teacher. All accessible helps were employed. Written outlines of these preparations were carried with her to the class. They form an interesting collection, taken together, as now found among her papers. One of them is here copied, without any alteration.

"LESSON 2.

The Parable of the covetous rich man.

Luke xii, 13–21.—13. What did one of the company say to Jesus? One of *what* company? Verse 1.—Innumerable multitude. Why did he request Christ to speak to his brother? He thought his brother would stand in awe of Christ, and submit to his determination. What is an inheritance? What one possesses by heirship, or other rights.—14. How did Jesus answer him? Had not the Lord Jesus a right to be a judge and decide? Yes.

Did he come into the world to do this? Matt. xviii, 11. What does he say of the nature of his kingdom, in John xviii, 36.—15. What did he say to the people? What is covetousness? An inordinate desire of earthly things, or what belongs to our neighbors,—avarice,—having an insatiable desire for things belonging to others. What did he say a man's life does not consist in? What is meant by that? Psalm xlix, 17.—What do you read in Psalm xxxvii, 16,—and Proverbs xv, 16?—If a man has a great abundance of goods, can he make his life longer than God pleases? No.—Repeat 1 Timothy vi, 6–8.—What is the tenth commandment? 'Thou shalt not covet,' etc.—16. Jesus spake a parable unto them, how did he begin it? Who caused the ground to bring forth plentifully? Psalm cxlvii, 7–8. What did the rich man think within himself? What ought he to have done with his fruits? Distributed them to the poor and needy, etc. etc. But what did he say he would do? What did the Lord Jesus say about laying up treasure on earth, in Matt. viii, 19? Repeat 1 Timothy vi, 17, 18. What would this rich man say to his soul? How many years may one be sure of in this world? None.—What is written in James iv, 13–15? If a man should live many years, how must he spend his time? To the glory of God. Repeat Ecclesiastes xi, 9. This rich man had 'many years' to live in *another world*, do we read that he provided for them? We do not.—What did God say to him in the midst of his plenty and security? What is the meaning of 'Thy soul shall be required of thee?' It shall be separated from the body, and called to give an account of itself at the tribunal of God. Repeat Psalm liii, 7.—21. What does our Lord add in this verse? What is it to lay up treasures for one's self? Heaping up *earthly treasures*, and not being rich towards

God. What are Christians warned against, in verse 29? What is written concerning the desire to be rich, in 1 Timothy vi, 9–10? What is it to be rich towards God? Psalm cxii, 9.—How should we use the things of this world? 1 Cor. vii, 31.—What will overtake him who trusts in his riches? Prov. xi, 28.—If we have them what should we do with them? We should distribute them to those who are needy, or in distress, or to any proper use. Why may you not, like the rich man, look for worldly ease? Because we are not to expect ease in this perplexing world. Have you any promise that you shall see another day? No."

This exhibits no more labor than each of the other "outlines of lessons." Some written out in blank books, and some on separate half-sheets. The following report speaks for itself. It is copied as a sample of many similar documents which she prepared at different times as called for.

"At our last teachers' meeting, it was requested that the teachers should have reports prepared for this evening respecting their classes. I esteem it a privilege that my Heavenly Father permits me to labor in his vineyard of love. The Sabbath-school is and for several years has been my delight. God has entrusted to my care eight beloved scholars, for whose salvation I feel deeply interested. As he gave them to me, he in effect said, 'Take these and bring them up for me,'—and he will certainly expect me to be faithful while they remain under my charge. It is my practice to converse personally with them when I meet them from Sabbath to Sabbath,—to place before them life and death, and endeavor to persuade them to give their

hearts to God now, while they have an opportunity. One of my number has, as I humbly hope, chosen the good part, and united with the church. The other members do at times appear deeply anxious, and are almost persuaded to become Christians, but at length, after grieving the Holy Spirit, say 'Go thy way for *this* time.' On the last Sabbath I had a very precious season in conversing with two of them, and one engaged to meet me every day at the throne of grace, to pray for her salvation, until she is converted. It is my earnest desire to hear each of my dear scholars saying, 'Oh, pray for me.'"

At different times, interrupted only by ill health, or journeying, she continued to be a Sabbath-school teacher, at Providence, till she was married, and then instructed a Bible-class, in Hopkinton, when able to do so. A large number of souls were thus brought under the influence of her prayerful fidelity. She was permitted to rejoice in the hopeful conversion of many of them, and all of them who survive her, retain vivid remembrance of her appeals. There seemed to be but one object in all her instructions, and all her remarks. It was conversion. It was the culture of intelligent piety. She dwelt on no dogma, although decided in religious opinion herself. She sought for "the grace of God," to save souls. *Love of souls* gave her *power*.

CHAPTER V.

HER PREPARATION FOR A PROTRACTED MEETING.—INTEREST IN IT.—ITS INFLUENCE.

At an evening prayer-meeting, on Tuesday, May 3d, "Rev. Mr. Cornhill, of Woodstock, Con., was providentially present. His remarks were very solemn, impressive, and profitable." Under this influence she wrote,—"I am led to think, what evidence have I that I am born of God? True, I love to meet with the people of God. But perhaps this is owing chiefly to custom. Frequently do I attend meeting without having the least motive for going." She was unconsciously drawn there by her feelings, she states on this occasion, without much reflection. She complained on the next Sabbath,—"I did not enjoy the sermon very much this morning. I regret that I do not enjoy sermons more. The day has seemed tedious. Have not enjoyed it at all." On Wednesday, May 25th, her "heart was called to rejoice. Eight openly declared, before a great multitude of people, what God had done for their souls. It reminded her "of the time when" she told her "experience before the church. Eight joined then, and it had been a very dull time in the church. All but one were young." At an evening visit, she told one conversing with her respecting her experience, "that she was ordinarily in an unhappy frame of mind. There seemed to be no satisfaction in any of her efforts. She had become too indifferent to her religious interests;" adding, "It is true, by these feelings, that I am not in a

Despondency.

state to meet my judge." On Saturday, June 4, at six, P. M., "a few met together for the purpose of prayer. That meeting will be remembered very long. Resolutions were formed to serve God better." Her wish was, "Through his strength may we be enabled so to perform them that our consciences may be cleared, and so be acceptable to God." But her soul was still in the dark. On Friday she was left to say, "I am led to believe that the Spirit of God has entirely left me. I cannot feel. I cannot repent. I am unhappy. I do not feel the love of God in my soul. I have been wicked enough to think and say that I wished to die. I feel that I shall be called to a premature grave. I feel that it is necessary that I should be prepared for death. I know not how long my stay may be on earth. I feel that it will be short. Yet I have been led to doubt my acceptance with God. I feel that I have no evidence of being born again. Oh that I felt as in months past.

'Sweet was the time, when first I felt
The Saviour's pardoning blood,
Applied to cleanse my soul from guilt,
And bring me home to God.'

But now I feel that these words apply to my case,—

'For all my joys are gone.'
'No light to me returns.'
'Now Satan threatens to prevail.'

I do not enjoy any thing in the world, nor much in religion. My feelings are gloomy." She sought relief in prayer, secret and social, and in free conversation with devoted Christian friends, who "had a profitable season together," "conversation such as" they would "not be ashamed to meet in judgment." She now "very frequently visited Christian friends," and thus notices this fact,—"Oh what

a privilege I enjoy, in so frequently visiting Christians; and how pleasant it would be if, at all times, when we meet we should converse together on the subject of religion." But she was "often disappointed by trifling remarks," and "led astray." She now for weeks enjoyed much. While visiting Boston, she "went to the morning prayer-meeting with delight." "Visited several Sabbath schools." A sermon, at Rev. Mr. Malcom's church, on "A good hope through grace," gave her encouragement.

She wrote on July 12,—"I now enter upon my seventeenth year, and I do humbly desire to spend it with Jesus. I long to *live better.* I propose reading the Scriptures four times each day, and as often offer my feeble prayer to God. Oh, that I were an *humble follower* of the meek and lowly Jesus. *Can* I spend this year as I have spent all others, serving Satan and the world?"—"I hoped that when I commenced a new year, I should feel very differently; that I should be alive to the cause of God; but I am still very, very cold, in a luke-warm state, far from being happy. Often do I endeavor to wear a cheerful countenance when I feel sad,—because I live so far from God. The world, I fear, would never know me to be a Christian, did they not see me at the Lord's table. I am conscious that I ought so to live that others would take knowledge of me that I have been with Jesus."

Her return from Boston, found an increased attention to the state of their souls beginning to appear in the church. Many others had felt as she had.—"Thursday, Aug. 4th, was set apart by the church as a day of fasting and prayer." She went to the public services, and "met with a few sisters for a prayer-meeting, all feeling a great necessity for being deeply humbled." Desiring to be alone for secret communion with God, she was that evening

Commencement of expected meeting.

"*obliged* to entertain company, and converse on worldly subjects," in which she "felt no interest." A gentleman from the state of New York, who made some statements respecting the revivals there enjoyed, "seemed as if he were a messenger sent from God. He brought glad tidings from a far country."—On the evening of Aug. 9th, at six o'clock, "she and seventeen other ladies met to pray especially for a blessing to attend the meetings in contemplation." "At seven, Rev. Messrs. Maltby of Sutton, Fitch of Holliston, and Cornhill of Woodstock, addressed the people." She "looked for, hoped for, and expected a great blessing from these meetings." She wrote of them at different times:—

"Aug. 10th. This day our meetings commence, but in vain will be all our exertions unless Jehovah bless us. About half past nine, the Rev. Mr. Finney arrived here from New York, with pa, and is very welcome among us. At ten, Rev. Mr. Maltby preached from Rev. xxii, 17. A most excellent sermon. At two, prayer-meeting in the vestry; Rev. Mr. Dow, and Mr. Wisner, Mr. Vernon, and Mr. Wilson offered prayer. At three, preaching by Rev. Mr. Fitch of Holliston, from Heb. ii, 3. Another excellent sermon. After ten, had the pleasure of sharing conversation with Rev. Mr. Finney, Rev. Mr. Waterman, Mr. Pratt, and Mr. Cornhill, and several others. Mr. Searle of Grafton, with others, led in prayer at the vestry in the evening. At eight, Rev. Mr. Finney preached from Isaiah lv, 7. A most powerful sermon. After meeting we had *family worship*, something which I have ever wished for since I loved Jesus Christ. I think I feel more alive, but I am not half awake yet. I want to feel humble, and have very great faith. I pray almost incessantly to feel more. Were it not necessary for my feeble body

to obtain sleep, I should love to pray all night, and wrestle with God in prayer until I prevail. I want to get low at the feet of Jesus, begging for pardon.

Aug. 11. At five, the morning prayer-meeting was nearly filled. Rev. Messrs. Fitch, Finney, Hopkins, and Wisner prayed. At nine, public prayer-meeting. At ten, Dr. Wisner, of Boston, preached from Isaiah xl, 3–5. A very heart-searching sermon. At two, a prayer-meeting. Rev. Messrs. Dow, Searle, and Maltby prayed. At three, Rev. Mr. Everett, of Norwich, Con., preached from James iv, 7. At half after six, Rev. Dr. Wisner spoke and prayed, and also Rev. Mr. Holmes, of New Bedford. Evening, Rev. Mr. Finney preached from 'Wages of sin is death.'

The next day, 'on the call of Dr. Wisner, for all Christians who resolved to live differently, to live more to God, and be more faithful, to rise, nearly all rose; after which he prayed.' After he had preached, that afternoon, a very solemn sermon from Psalm l, 21, 22, anxious sinners were requested to remain, and sixty-five stopped, while Christians retired to the vestry to pray for them." "It appeared like an awful separation. There are three classes of persons, anxious sinners waiting to know what they must do, Christians retiring to pray for them, and careless sinners who left the house."

"Saturday, 13th, A. M. Sermon by Mr. Cornhill, from Gen. iii, 9. 'Where art thou?' P. M., Dr. Wisner, from Acts vii, 51. Ninety anxious remained, one so distressed as to be almost unable to leave without help."

"Sabbath. Delightful season with my class. One teacher anxious. Rev. Mr. Finney preached from Obadiah iii. A very searching sermon. The brethren *appeared to feel*, at noon at prayer-meeting. Mr. Fitch

She receives a new impulse in religion.—Pledge to prayer.

preached, P. M., from Isaiah xlv, 9. Evening, Mr. Finney, from Rev. xxii, 17. Faithful preaching. Anxious sinners and Christians remained."

Monday, 15th, one hundred inquirers met at the vestry. Mr. Finney preached from Matt. xi, 20. On Tuesday, "Mr. Finney conversed and prayed with a Sabbath-school teacher, who promised to make the attempt to give God her heart now. On Thursday, Mr. F. preached from Joshua xxiv, 15."

Up to this time she had been *interested* in common with others. But on Saturday evening, 20th, she received a new impulse in the divine life, which never left her. It was while hearing a sermon of Mr. Finney, from Luke iv, 12: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." She writes after hearing it,—"I feel that I have tempted God during my whole life. Even by conversing with awakened and careless sinners have I tempted God. How often have I told them *to persevere*, not to be *discouraged*, to wait *God's time*, called them poor sinners,—seeking Jesus sorrowing, and used other similar expressions. I now feel it to be awfully sinful in a professing Christian to tell sinners to *persevere in sin*, and not *be discouraged* in it. God has commanded them to repent now. When he is knocking at the door of their hearts, begging admission, *now is his time*. As to seeking Jesus sorrowing, it is ridiculous, for we dont have to hunt after him. He is not at some distant place, that we cannot find him; no, he is in our hearts. Perhaps by my telling sinners so, they have lost their souls."—Her subsequent efforts exhibited this conviction.

"Aug. 26. Mr. F. requested all those professing Christians present, who would feel it a privilege, and would resolve to pray three times a day for one month, especially

for an out-pouring of the Spirit of God, and pray with faith, to manifest it by rising, when a very great number arose, and he offered a very solemn prayer. After prayer, he addressed sinners, and requested those who would resolve to make religion the first business they attended to, to arise, when more than one hundred arose; after which the Rev. Mr. Waterman prayed for them. It was the most solemn meeting I ever knew."

"Mr. Finney's last sermon to us, Aug. 28th, was from Luke xiii, 22, 'Strive to enter in at the straight gate,' &c."

29. "Called to bid Mr. F. good-bye. There was a room full of us. He prayed with us before we left. It appears that there is much to be done in this wicked place, to convince sinners of their danger, and he has awakened some."

The result of this special effort was cheering in many respects, in others of doubtful advantage. Many souls were led to Jesus, and if some 'ran but for a season,' such delinquencies are often met with after special grace has been granted. The influence upon her soul appears in passages like this from her letters and other papers:— "I do realize what an awful thing it is to be deceived on so important a subject." "I felt stronger conviction of sin than I ever felt before. Oh that God would search my heart." "I feel it my duty to repent now, and I will repent, for Jesus *will* have mercy on me." "Oh that God would have mercy on me, for I fear I have no mercy on myself." "It appears to me that I have backslidden from God, and it is a great mercy that he spares me." "I ought to ask myself more, What can I do to promote the cause of Christ?" "I would carry him wherever I go, keeping him as my constant companion." "I think I feel the importance of living for God, if I expect to reign with

Special meetings left her more humble.

him in glory." "Let my life be long or short, it is my desire that it may be spent to the glory of God." "Every trifle takes my affections from Jesus, and places them on the world." "I feel great anxiety for souls, which brings tears to my eyes and sorrow to my heart." She saw herself and her Saviour more clearly, and *grew humble*, as one important result of these meetings.

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. WEBSTER AS A TRACT DISTRIBUTER.

By comparing her letters, "reports," "Tract records," and statements of others who witnessed these efforts, the following sketch has been obtained, and is given as far as practicable in her own words.

"Saturday, April 7, 1832. I have recently become a Tract distributer, but have viewed my duty to be very unpleasant, and have dreaded it very much. I began my work in the closet, and trusted in God to assist me to perform my duty very faithfully. I commenced, and had a cordial reception at each family I visited. Wherever opportunity presented, I endeavored to speak in favor of my Master's cause, and the Sabbath-school. Some of the families were apparently in the enjoyment of religion. Among the thirty-five, there were three Unitarian, two Universalist, one Roman Catholic, and some of almost every other denomination. I met with no refusal. I found it a pleasant duty, and hope it will continue to be so in

succeeding months. May God assist me to be a faithful servant."

"Dear M——, I left your house on Saturday morning at quarter past eight, and about ten concluded to distribute tracts. I accordingly commenced in Pine-street, and visited eight families in the morning, and in the afternoon finished my district. There were all denominations. One has returned the tract, 'with a sincere wish that I should not leave any more there, for if she wished for tracts she could apply to ——.' I was cordially received at every family, and most were much pleased with them. When night came, I was, as you may suppose, very tired."

"Wednesday, 11th. This afternoon had a tract returned. I rather suspected they would *decline accepting it*, but when they received it, I little thought they would *return it*."

"On Tuesday, May 11th, I distributed my tracts for the month on the 'importance of consideration.'"—"When I became a tract distributer, I trembled in view of the solemn responsibility which must rest upon me. The very fact of *carrying* the little 'herald of mercy' to every family included in the district in which I was to labor, caused me to tremble. I first earnestly sought the aid of the Holy Spirit, that the tract might be successful in promoting the cause of Zion, and gain access to the hearts of the individuals who received them. I rejoice to say that, the present month, I have met with no repulses. Nearly all expressed a wish to receive them monthly. In one instance a Unitarian tract was given me in return, and a request made that no more might be left. I was encouraged to persevere in my duty, by the profitable conversation of some of the ministers of God, with whom I unexpectedly met. One of them prayed earnestly that a blessing might

Desires Christians to pray for her success.—Map in her closet to aid her prayers.

attend the efforts that are being made to extend the gospel throughout our city. I think, if any one needs the prayers of God's people, it is the tract distributer."—This report ends with "Christian friends, oh pray for us."

June 7th. "One lady said she had no occasion for tracts, as she was as 'good as she could be,' and 'nothing but a higher power could make her any better,' but she would take it for an apprentice who liked to read such things. She remarked that she did not see what good they could do, but considered it unnecessary labor and expense. She said she had no time to read them, for she could hardly find time to read her Bible. Her cares are so numerous that she seldom has an opportunity to attend church on the Sabbath. I endeavored to prevail on her to read the tracts, assuring her that they could do her no injury, and perhaps might do her much good. She finally concluded, that as it was so small, she might possibly find time to read it. She said she read part of the first ('Persuasive to public worship,') but had not read the second."—"I am aware, that in distributing tracts we shall have many difficulties to encounter, but if we only commence our work in the closet, we shall be prepared to meet all opposition." "I think I feel an increasing interest in the distribution."

She kept in her place of prayer a map of her "district," and the printed directions of the American Tract Society to distributers, and made herself familiar with the tracts, by frequent perusal. She also took great pains to learn the character and habits of those whom she visited, and what kind of advice they needed, especially noticing all the children.

"July 14, 1832. The present month I had an opportunity of conversing, a long time, with a lady who has past

the meridian of life and yet remains unprepared for death and eternity. She is sensible of her hardness of heart, and says she has been thinking *she* was *ready*, but was waiting for God. I assured her that God's time was *now*, and that it remained with *her* to decide whether to be a Christian or not. I entreated her to read the tract (it was 'on repentance') prayerfully."

"Aug. 11th. Tract distributed, 'Quench not the Spirit.' Number of families thirty-eight. Tracts left thirty-six." "After I commenced my distribution of tracts, I had not proceeded far before my heart was caused to ache for the lightness with which this tract was treated by one who had previously refused to receive them. After leaving one with Rev. Mr. Waterman, he said he would pray with me before I left as I needed strength. He prayed very fervently, and it did appear that I received new vigor." "It is gratifying to have confidence that Christians are praying for us, and for the cause in which we labor." "In my district there are but few who do not profess to be children of God, and there are none of the poorer class of people in the district. Therefore I have but little opportunity of doing good. The field of labor is small, but we must recollect that every one of those visited has a *soul*, and each *soul* is of inestimable value."

"Sept. 19. Since our last tract meeting, I have felt more than ever the importance of faithfulness, and for several weeks previous to this last distribution, made it a special subject of prayer for the aid of the Holy Spirit to guide me in my duty, and direct me how to speak to the hearts of those whom I visited." "The tract 'Quench not the Spirit,' has not been distributed in vain. It has found its way to the heart of an aged sinner, and has led her to renounce her sins, and trust in Christ for salvation. It

has been my privilege to see her several times. She is apparently about seventy years of age, and just on the brink of eternity. Upon inquiry, I found that she had recently obtained a hope. I asked her what first awakened her to a sense of her sins, to which she replied, the tract 'Quench not the Spirit.' She remarked, that it was a blessed tract, and requested me to read it to her, which I did. Her conversion appears genuine."—"I called on the aged Mrs. Gilmore, and found her low, but calm and composed. She requested me to read to her again. I read a few of the Psalms. After I had finished reading, said she, 'You could not have selected any passages of Scripture better adapted to my feelings than those which you have read. She requested me to pray with her, which I esteemed a privilege."

She speaks of conversing a long time with a little girl, "about twelve years old, entreated her to give her heart to God to-day, and prayed particularly for her." "Should but *one* sinner be saved by this instrumentality, is it not worth laboring for?"

"Oct. 10. I asked one lady in my district if she would consent to receive the tracts monthly. 'What are the *conditions?*' said she. I told her there were no other conditions than that she would read them. 'Oh, then, I'll take them,' she replied."—"At another place where I knocked, I saw a young lady. I asked her if she would hand that tract to Mrs. ——. 'No,' said she, very roughly, 'I *hand tracts* to no one.' I then asked to see Mrs. ——, who received it very thankfully."—"Another individual said she thought I was 'very good to carry tracts out, for she supposed I received *nothing* for it." "I saw many of God's children who were very ready to converse on the subject of religion, and whose godly con-

versation warmed my heart. They encouraged me to faithfulness and perseverance, and to much prayer." *This* reward did not seem to *her* as "*nothing.*"

"Nov. 6. I was asked by one lady, if I had not become tired of it? 'Not of the object,' I replied, 'for we should never be weary in well-doing.' Many in my district prize the tracts very highly, and always thank me for them, saying they consider it a great kindness to have tracts carried to them, and when they have a sufficient number shall have them bound."—"One lady said, 'Rev. Mr. —— had conversed with her considerably on the subject, and endeavored to influence her not to receive the tracts. But,' said she, 'I cannot see that they do any harm, and I love to read them, and I think I shall continue to take them.' She remarked that she had a mind of her own, and *she knew* whether she liked them or not, and did not wish to 'be influenced by any one, as she did not pin her faith to any man's sleeve.'"—"In reference to the tract 'Persuasive to public worship,' an opposer asked one who had received it, 'if she believed in being *persuaded* to any thing?' 'Yes,' said she, 'to any thing good.'"—"There are some little incidents in tract distribution that are trying, yet the reward of an approving conscience, for having been engaged in my Master's cause, counterbalances all."—"I have been engaged in it eight months, and I do indeed love the employment. God loves it, I trust."—"There are seventy who go out monthly, to carry these 'heralds of salvation' to our citizens, and how much good seventy Christians who pray much, must do if they are faithful."

"This evening has been the *Tract distributers' concert of prayer.* One letter was read this evening from a man who has been converted by means of the tract 'Quench

not the Spirit.' He wrote the letter to our president, in order to encourage the tract cause."

In December, she asked a lady whether she read the tracts, as they were left. The reply was, "Some of them, but I do not think they will do me any good, for there is nothing in them but what I knew before." This led to a long conversation on the value of *reviewing* impressions, and the practicability of gaining *new ideas* respecting what is before *known*.

She found a young man in an irreligious family who was described as "in a kind of gloomy way, which *you call* serious-minded, I suppose, though he says he is much happier than he ever was before." Here followed an effort to point out the error of supposing religion gloomy, and the fact that sin only made Christians seem sad, which would make sinners feel sad too, if they but saw their true situation.

She was saluted, as she began the work of 1838, on Jan. 17, by the sneering epithet, "the tract lady," and other marks of contempt, in part of her district. But she only made the sneer an excuse for kind exhortation.

In February, she called at the house of an intemperate man, where she found that a tract, previously left, on temperance, had made a deep impression. She had left the tract on the table, and the man, finding it there, on his return, had become dreadfully enraged, and cursed tracts and the religion of Jesus, and declared that if he had seen her he would have let her know what he thought of her. "He was not a drunkard. He did not need such things." Now, however, all was changed. "Opposition had entirely ceased."

In March, she was invited into houses where she had before been received coldly, and found "several oppor-

tunities to converse personally about the soul." Two gentlemen in her district had found peace in believing in Christ, one a sea-captain, the other a young man, who, since his conversion, had reproved his pious wife for not having done more to lead him to repentance, while he was in such danger and yet knew it not.

In May, she conversed with a young lady, who by sickness had been brought near to the grave, but who had not become reconciled to God. She urged the claims of the Saviour so earnestly that an abiding impression appeared to be made. A meeting for prayer had been established by her instrumentality, and she was now delighted to find that Christians were beginning to awake to activity. Her regular and earnest visits, at all times of the year, was an example which could but rebuke those who did nothing for souls. She urged them to *pray much for God's blessing upon the city*, "till the whole city is converted to God."

In June, one who had received the tracts with utter indifference, spoke of liking to read them, but insisted, in subsequent conversation, that she could not convert herself. "God alone could do the work," she said. This, coming from *her*, led to deeply interesting reflection, when the distributer reached home. In reviewing the scene, she stated,—"I told her God did not expect her to convert herself, neither did he wish her to attempt it. But he did wish and expect her to use the means of his appointment. When she said she thought sometimes that she would give *any thing* to be a Christian, I asked her if she would give her heart. 'Yes, if I knew how to go to work to do it, but I do not.' I endeavored, in a humble manner, to tell her how to give her heart to God. I told her it was because she was not *willing* to be a Christian,

that she was not one. I asked her how she thought she would spend this day, if she knew that this day her soul would be required of her. She said,—'In studying the Scriptures and in prayer.' Well, I replied, this *may* be the case. I consider you to be in a dangerous state. I entreat you to give your heart to Jesus *now*. Do not delay till tomorrow, but repent now, and be converted. She thanked me for the anxiety I felt for her, and the frequent conversations I have had with her."

In July, among other incidents which portray her trials and feelings, the following occurred. At a house where she had always received and now expected a cordial reception, the "gentlemanly occupant, as soon as he heard the word tract, said very angrily, 'We want none of your tracts here.'" She was neither alarmed nor disconcerted, but politely replied that she had been in the habit of leaving them monthly, and was not aware that there were any objections.—"Yes, I know you *have* left them, and I have wished to see you, to tell you to leave no more of them here." She was then repulsed in a manner which would hardly have been expected from *such* a man, even towards an impudent beggar. Tender sensibilities like hers could ill brook such language. It was designed as insult, and resentment was expected. She quietly and politely left the house. She hastened to her closet, and asked her Master, "not to *rebuke*, but to convert that unfeeling man."

In September, she found that a young lady in the district, who had often been conversed with, and had experienced the strivings of the Spirit, and read the tracts left from month to month, and had lately told her godly parent, "Father, I intend to, I mean to be a Christian before I die," had been suddenly cut down by disease and death.

Her reason was at once taken from her, and she died with no preparation. This was an affecting occurrence to her who had so often tried to urge preparation for death. It was mentioned in her report for the month, as an incentive to fidelity and prayer.

In October, she found "that the Holy Spirit had preceded the work of distribution. I felt that God was with me, opening doors which had previously been shut, or open just wide enough to receive the tract alone, affording no opportunity to converse."

These extracts and statements must suffice to portray her efforts in this department, which were assiduously followed for years, until ill health precluded her from them entirely. At one time she would meet her fellow-laborers for prayer before going out upon her work. She remarked of one of her calls upon a pastor, "Did Christian ministers realize how much a tract distributer was encouraged and blest by their prayers, they would never let one leave their dwellings without first praying God to bless their feeble attempts to spread the gospel." At one time she solicited names to the temperance pledge, during her tour, with much success. At another, she was cheered by the triumph of a dying Christian in her district. One bitter opposer to distribution became softened by her kind and lady-like decision. She found the people often seeking to talk with her about their souls. Anxious sinners plead for her prayers, and sought her counsels. She found her call often anticipated with delight. Her long acquaintance gave them and her confidence. The sick were often solicitous to see her. She was still and often *tried*. One person, an infidel, long deceived her, by "pretending to piety," for amusement. Her last record of distribution was in Aug. 1835. She closed her labors in her district with such thoughts as

these:—"What have I done to bring sinners to Christ? My conscience replies, if *any* thing it has been *very little.* Have I been instrumental of turning *one* sinner to God. Is there *one soul* who could rise up and call me blessed? I feel that I have great cause of gratitude for the blessing of God." In resigning her place, her health rendering her efforts very irregular, while "fully persuaded that the time" had "come when one wholly devoted to it" should succeed her, she expressed "deep interest in the cause, and great attachment to the district."

CHAPTER VII.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER EXHIBITED IN LETTERS WRITTEN AT NINETEEN.

"*Providence, April* 27, 1832.

EVER DEAR FRIEND,—Your kind and affectionate letter of the 18th, was duly received. It gave me great pleasure to receive a letter from one whom I hope ever to hold dear to me. I should have answered you soon after having received it, but thought it advisable to wait until I had a private opportunity. Such an one now offers, and I will at all events write a few lines. My time at present is so much occupied, that I am obliged to run up stairs every little while, and write you a few words at a time. I find your class to be very interesting. I have become exceedingly attached to them, and hope to be faithful to them. I hope to water that seed which you have already sown,

and may God give the increase. I hope the time is near at hand when they may experience the forgiveness of their sins, and be made subjects of redeeming grace. With regard to my own feelings, I remain in a cold state. Within a very short time, I have felt a greater interest at the throne of grace than previous, and I hope I shall still feel more. Oh that I might feel distressed on account of sin, and may God have mercy on me, and reclaim me, for I acknowledge my backslidings. Oh, I hope, my dear Mary, you will pray for me, and may God answer you. I hope you continue to enjoy that love to God, which it is manifest by your letter that you do enjoy. I wish I could write an interesting account of the church, but I fear there is not as much interest as a few weeks past; but I judge them not.

I hope your *boarding-school* will not be the means of *accomplishing* you both so much as to forget *little Providence* and its inhabitants. You will probably think of us tomorrow evening. The meeting is to be here, and I hope a good one.

I must close, hoping you will ever enjoy peace and communion with God. That this may be your privilege is the prayer of

Your unworthy friend, REBECCA."

"*Providence, May* 16, 1832.
Wednesday evening, half past ten.

MUCH VALUED FRIEND,—I have stolen away for a moment, while Jane fits my work, and shall expect to be called in two moments, so I shall just say to you, that I dreamed of being at a ball last night with several of our church, and I think I dreamed continually through the night about different affairs. Perhaps, my dear Mary,

you have thought it strange that I should fill my letters with nonsense, and have even wondered at it; but I generally wish to say all I can that will be new to you, and in that way I go on in a long strain. I called to see Eliza Jennings on Monday, and found her confined to her bed. She was at Deacon Paine's. I inquired about you, and I think it probable you will never see her again in this world; but she manifests much resignation to the will of God, and says she has no wish that the disposal of her life is left to her own choice. She feels to rejoice that she did not put off the concerns of eternity till she was laid upon a bed of sickness. She says she has enjoyed her mind very much during her sickness.

I must stop again, for ma calls to me that my work is ready, and I must go. I think I shall find it very difficult to write you as long now as I wish, for our having a mantua-maker, I am obliged to keep constantly employed with my needle. I don't want to, but I must, shut up my papers.

I have now finished the business of the day, and return again to my room, in order to spend some time with you, my dear girl.

The church, I must say, if we can judge by appearances, are like myself stupid, and do not feel an engagedness of heart, which is essentially necessary, to be acceptable to God. I fear some judgment will befal us if we do not arise from the dead, and work in the vineyard of the Lord; for perhaps the Lord will say, 'Cut him down, why cumbereth he the ground.' Oh! let us not be cumberers of the ground, but let us bear fruit to the glory of God.

John called this afternoon, to see if I had concluded to accompany him in the morning, but I was compelled to

tell him no. I have thought very seriously of visiting Boston this week, and several times spoken to my parents about it; but they thought it not advisable for me to go at present; therefore I reluctantly gave up all hopes. I could not feel willing to give entirely up until this morning. I had too fondly hoped, that in a very short time I should be permitted to behold the faces of those whom I dearly love; but I feel that it is right. I well know my dear parents do all in their power to make me happy, and sacrifice many pleasures themselves, in order to add to my happiness. I am confident, my dear Mary, that I have kind, indulgent parents, whom I have many times disobeyed, and caused tears of sorrow to escape their bosoms; often have I grieved them by misconduct, while they have tenderly and affectionately corrected me. Yes, dear Mary, I am an ungrateful child, and I rejoice that I feel humble this moment, while I reflect upon it. Oh, that I felt deep contrition for sin, and would humble my heart and cry to God for mercy. Oh, he will have mercy, I am assured by his Holy Word, for says he, 'Let him return, and I will have mercy;' and again, 'I will *abundantly pardon*.' Oh, I do feel to return to him, for I have wandered into by and forbidden paths, and I fear have grieved his Holy Spirit.

Your ever affectionate friend,

REBECCA G. R."

"*Providence, June* 2, 1832.
Saturday, 5 *o'clock*.

I love to write to my dear friends, so you have found it, dear Mary, for I let no opportunities of private conveyance pass unimproved. Your charming little note was handed me this morning by Mr. Crawford. I was delighted to receive it, for I had been expecting one for a long time,

that is to say, for several days past. Yesterday was a day of bustle and confusion. Amasa E. Warmsly was executed upon the gallows, at about half past ten, about half way between Providence and Pawtuxet. It is supposed that about ten or twelve thousand were present to witness the awful scene. I understand that Mr. Pattison, (who visited him nearly every day,) says he did not feel satisfied that his peace was made with God. Oh, dear Mary, how awful to be thus hurried from time to eternity.

I love that verse which reads,—

'Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest,'

referring to the Holy Sabbath. I anticipate a happy day tomorrow; I hope I shall not be disappointed. Oh, dear Mary, what a privilege I enjoy; but I do not value it as I ought, and fear I never shall until deprived of it. My heart, dear M., begins to feel, yes, it begins to ache, on account of sin, and I hope it will be truly broken; and that I may again enjoy the light of God's reconciled countenance. I feel that it is high time to awake from my stupidity, and call upon God. Oh, M., remember me before God, that I may be forgiven for my transgressions, and live and act for Jesus. Tomorrow solemn duties are before me. First my class are to meet me at Sabbath-school, for religious instruction. How shall I teach them? Oh my insufficiency to teach those who are nearly as old as myself. But their souls are not secure, and what I say to them tomorrow may decide their destiny to all eternity. Oh, that God would assist me, and make me very faithful, and clear the skirts of my garments from the blood of their souls. And after other duties of the day, I hope to commemorate the dying love of my dear Redeemer. May this prove to me a joyful season,—yea a feast of fat things.

Well, dear Mary, I have leisure this noon to finish my letter. I had an interesting time with my class this morning, but did not have an opportunity of conversing with them about their souls, as I had wished. Our lesson was very interesting, and it is the wish of our superintendent to have us finish the lessons, and make remarks afterwards, so that we seldom can spend much time in personal conversation. Our dear pastor preached a feeling sermon this forenoon, from Luke xxiii, 39–43, and he is to preach Mrs. Wm. Richmond's funeral sermon this afternoon. Her death has caused many tears to flow. She is not only a loss to her afflicted husband and children, but to the church of God, and to the whole community. But our loss and her gain indeed, it may be said. 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord,' 'for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.' How should we feel, dear friend, were God to bereave us of our kind parents? Should we not murmur, and say this affliction is too grievous to be borne? I fear we should. But as God so kindly spares them to us, let us render to him gratitude of heart, and let us be kind and obedient to our parents, and ever follow them as they follow Christ. Many times have we grieved them, and caused their hearts to ache; but let us now begin to love and obey them. Their greatest pleasure is and ever has been to promote our happiness, and we ought to feel to give thanks to God who has so kindly provided such dear parents for us, while he has bereaved other children of theirs, who perhaps were equally kind and affectionate."

The following letter shows that she was not divested, by religion, of the usual hilarity of her age.

"*Providence, June* 25, 1832.
Monday afternoon.

MY DEAR MARY,—I presume you anticipated that my next letter would be dated either at Cape Vincent, N. Y., or Kingston, U. C., but it is neither of these, it is at Providence, our much loved city. I have now but a short time to devote to writing, therefore shall take no pains, for fear I should be obliged to shorten my letter. I wrote, in my letter to Louisa, my reasons for delaying my journey, or rather of my having given up the idea entirely of visiting Canada this summer. I can hardly collect my thoughts to write this afternoon, they are *wandering* all about the world, and the carpenters are at work on Grace Church, pounding and hammering at a great rate, and almost stun a body. What do you think about the cholera? Are you alarmed or not? I confess I don't feel very much alarmed about it, but when it comes, it may affect me very differently; however, I do not believe in borrowing trouble. It is well to think, but not always to be fearing what may indeed never reach our land.

I have not received half as many letters from you as I had expected when you left. It seems a long time since I heard from you. You know we were to write once a fortnight, and instead of that, I sometimes write twice a week. All your friends unite with me in a great deal of love to you. Well, I must now stop, and go and see Mrs. A. and Mrs. T. Will you go with me, my dear Mary. Good bye. In haste.

Yours, REBECCA."

"*Providence, July* 2, 1832.
Monday afternoon.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,—Your dear letter was handed me yesterday morning after Sabbath-school, by Emeline Eames. I was obliged to wait until meeting was over before I could read it, and then took it into my chamber, and had a feast, and could scarcely avoid bedewing it with tears. I wished to sit down and answer it immediately, but thought it most expedient to wait a few days. I confess I am happy in the thoughts of being my own mistress yet. I am not in bondage, as you, E., E. E., and many others are. I am independent yet, and how very fortunate I am.

I ought to say something better, and will begin with stating, that I have attended a good many Methodist meetings lately, and enjoyed them. They have fine preaching. Perhaps you say, have you been profited by these means of grace? I fear not. I do not feel right yet. I wish I could feel, as I trust you feel, a spirit of prayer. I ought not to rest satisfied until I do. I hope you pray for me; I *think* you do; I *know* you have. I hope, when I write again, to enjoy the love of God in my soul, and to have my mind wholly absorbed in religious things. I am glad to find that you rejoice with me in having relinquished my journey. How you must feel to have Miss W. leave you; but it will be all for the best. I hope she will do much good in the blessed cause.

Yours affectionately, R. G. RUSSELL."

Extract from a letter dated July 24, 1832.

"It is often a task for me to pray, and when I have performed the duty, a burden is off my mind. Is it so

with you? I trust not, for I suspect by your letters, you have been in the enjoyment of religion while in Charleston. If there was ever a time for prayer, it is certainly now. But I feel no spirit of prayer; no impression can be made on my wicked heart. Let me entreat of my dear Mary, to remember me when you address the throne of grace. I certainly need the prayers of my Christian friends. Our church are fast asleep, and I do not know but dead, (in a spiritual sense). But I do not attribute my coldness and stupidity to them, but to my own heart. Mr. Waterman's conversation was, at Mr. G.'s, truly spiritual; I enjoyed it very much. He exhorted all of us who were young to be active in the cause of Christ, and made a most fervent prayer with us, previous to his leaving. I thought then I would no longer remain as I had done, but arise from the *dead;* but how soon were his kind remarks *forgotten*, and here I am, as cold and lifeless as ever.

Sabbath morning I attended meeting. Soon after meeting commenced I felt quite sick, but thought I would try to remain until meeting was over. I staid as long as I could *possibly*, which was about the commencement of the sermon, and then went out. I cannot describe to you my feelings; I thought it impossible to get home, but with much exertion *succeeded*. I immediately went to bed, and laid there until tea time. In the evening felt quite well, except a general *debility*. To-day, quite as well as usual."

Extract dated Providence, Sept. 9, 1832.

"EVER BELOVED SISTER,—I lately called on a sick woman. Before I left her, she desired me to *pray* with

her, which I felt to be a privilege. This was the first time in my life that I was ever called upon to perform that duty on any similar occasion. I thought then how thankful I ought to be that I had practised the duty of prayer at our prayer-meetings, for how could I have refused the request of a person upon the brink of eternity, to pray with them? I think her stay on earth is to be short, and I pray that she may not be deceived, but that she may be prepared to give up her account at the bar of God.

Friday afternoon our sewing society met here. We had a very pleasant time. I did not go to the teachers' meeting that evening, as I felt quite unwell. Yesterday I felt no better, and of course did not attend the evening meeting, which I understood was very interesting. To-day I feel better, but rather weak; so do not imagine I am sick, I am not. I am quite alone, as our family are all at meeting, and how natural, my dear Mary, does it seem to be writing to you. It appears a dream that you have been with us; I can hardly realize it; but so it is,—we have enjoyed the society of our dear Mary five weeks, but now we are deprived of it, and probably shall be for quite a length of time. But while we are deprived of your society, do not let us be of your prayers, and you shall be remembered by us at a 'throne of grace.' I think I have recently felt more determined than ever to be a *consistent Christian*, and to that effect have been more earnest in prayer, and think I do indeed feel some love to Jesus, and love to pray to him more than I did, and hope I may do good in his glorious cause. I feel quite tried about my besetting sins, which I know are '*levity*' and '*slander*,' and I hope you will pray to God for me, that I may be able to overcome them.

Tears of penitence refreshing.

I am very sorry, dear Mary, that we passed our time so unprofitably while you were among us. If we had spent it as we ought to have done, how pleasant it would be to reflect upon; but we are so prone to vanity and levity, that we pass much time in a manner, ('which in our sober moments we revolt at.')

Wednesday, my dear girl, at one o'clock, I trust we met at the 'throne of grace,' as we proposed at our prayer-meeting on Monday. How very solemn our resolutions are. Oh, how earnest we should be to keep them faithfully. I had a pleasant season of prayer, and the very thought of there being so many of our praying circle engaged in the performance of the same duty, rendered it much pleasanter. I feel the vast importance of activity in the cause of Christ, and am *grieved* that I have lived so very far from God. I am astonished that I love *God* so *little* and the *world* so much. Oh, the wickedness of the human heart, and its liability to sin against a holy and a righteous *Governor*. But, dear girl, if I am not deceived, I do feel *something* of the *preciousness* of *a 'throne of grace,'* and *something* of a desire *never*, *never* again to sink into that dreadful worldly frame, in which I have been of late, but from which God has granted me a partial deliverance. I long to be an obedient, humble child. How refreshing are tears of penitence. Yes, they are refreshing. Oh, that I shed more of them,—that I wept for my sins from my inmost soul! I think, if I know my own heart, I feel more anxiety to live a holy life than ever."

"*Providence*, *Sept.* 16, 1832.

MY DEAR FATHER,—We are very glad to hear you are well. Hope your health will continue good, and that we shall soon see you again at home. The funerals of Mr.

Ravages of cholera, an incentive to duty.

Thurber, and Mr. Leman, took place on Wednesday afternoon, at 3 o'clock. It did indeed appear very solemn, to behold a hearse at each door, at the same time, ready to convey their bodies to the silent tomb, there to remain until the day of resurrection. Truly the Lord has come very near to us. He has taken *one* upon our *right* hand, and *one* upon our *left*, and we are yet spared. His mercy is indeed very great, and his long-suffering toward us is wonderful. To *his* holy name be all the glory and praise. There have been but very few cases of cholera since you left home. Mr. Boyd lost another child yesterday with it, and it was buried this morning at nine o'clock. I do not at present know of any case in our city. We have been remarkably favored thus far, and it is to be hoped the Lord will be merciful, and answer our prayers, and save our city from the dreadful ravages of the destroying pestilence.

This morning, Mr. Horton (the Methodist preacher) supplied Mr. Wilson's place. I was very much pleased with him. I believe Mr. Wilson was not very well.

We perceive, by the papers, the cholera is abating in New York. That you, dear Father, may be preserved, and enjoy the love of God shed abroad in your *soul*, is the *unceasing* prayer of your affectionate daughter,

REBECCA G. R."

"*Providence, Sept.* 23, 1832.

DEARLY BELOVED SISTER,—Your very affectionate letter reached here in due season, and I should have answered it immediately, but the ill health of my dear mother prevented. For more than a week she has been quite sick; but I am happy to say she is now nearly well. I thank you for your kindness, in writing me so soon. I was quite

delighted to hear from you. I cannot tell how many times I have read it, but '*not a few*;' it is very much worn, on account of being so very frequently opened; it has been *perused* and *re-perused*, and yet it is *new*. You must indeed have felt very *lonely*, dear Mary, the day you arrived at C., and such a change *must* have rendered it *lonely*. But I am glad to find you are contented now, and wish I could be with you. I know your ride must have been delightful, as you had such fine *company*. What shall I say next? I don't know, for I feel nothing at all like writing this noon; but I must say to you, that I am very *domestic* since you left home. I have only attended three evening meetings since you were here, and have been out but very little in the day time. I have occupied my time in *sewing* principally, but I contemplate many delightful walks this week. I am happy to hear that you have enjoyed a spirit of prayer during your absence. It is a privilege, but we seldom realize it as such. The cholera is still among us. It may cut us down. But if we are duly prepared, it will make no difference what disease may befal us. A. G. has nearly recovered. She sits up nearly all day. I think her sickness will lead her to God; I sincerely hope it will. E. E. has been very sick for a fortnight. She was taken the day after you left home, with a cold, and was confined with that a week. She then had a fever, and is still very sick,—does not sit up, but I believe is not considered dangerous. I hope she will soon recover, and be made very useful in Christ's vineyard, and be a living and shining light, and an ornament to the church.

I distributed my tracts Saturday, the 15th, and where I went, I endeavored to be faithful and do good. My visits were pleasant and profitable. There was nothing very

special occurred in my district the last month, but I rejoice in the privilege of being a distributer, and may God make me instrumental of doing great good.

Betsy McY. was buried a week ago to-day. Poor creature. As her life was miserable, so was her death. I must go to the tract meeting.

Affectionately, R. G. R."

"*Providence, Nov.* 11, 1832.

BELOVED BROTHER,—I received your truly welcome letter by cousin George, while I was in Boston. I received a package of letters there, and was very happy to find one from you among the number. Perhaps you may be surprised, when I tell you it was the first one you ever wrote me, but it is true.

On Wednesday, the 7th, a protracted meeting commenced at the Rev. Mr. Waterman's church, and continued four days. The meetings were very interesting, and I had the pleasure of attending many of them. A great deal was said on the worth of the undying *soul*, and no wonder there was, for did we realize the inestimable worth of the soul, how many would become the followers of our Lord and Master. Jesus knew the worth of a *soul*, when he said, 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul.' If he felt its value, why should not we likewise? I want you thus to feel. Christ loves your soul, and he is doing all in his power to induce you to secure its salvation. Warning after warning has he given you, and has endeavored to place before you motives to piety. Can you, oh, can you disregard all his calls, entreaties, and admonitions, and still persist in sin. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, I beseech you, for it is a

dangerous thing to trifle with the *Holy Ghost*. *Now* you have an opportunity to become a Christian, for all things are now ready. Jesus is ready; the Holy Spirit is ready. And are you not ready? Oh, do not procrastinate, for 'procrastination is the thief of *souls*.' Every thing is before you, to induce you to come to Jesus Christ. Oh, that I had language to speak what my heart feels for you. Could a sister's prayers and tears save you, then you would long ere this have been converted to God. But, alas, the grace of God alone is sufficient. Let me ask you, dear William, to participate with me in my joys, for I have ever found religion's ways to be pleasant, and her paths peace. I sought for pleasures in the world, but found no substantial pleasure until I found it in my Saviour, and should you seek for it here until you arrive at old age, I can assure you, you will not find it. I would say to you, in the language of the Holy Scriptures, 'Come go with me, and I will do you good.' I cannot bear to have you continue in rebellion against your Redeemer; but I long to see you an humble follower of Jesus. Perhaps you think me too urgent; but no, I would that I could be *more* persuasive. God requires it; the Saviour requires it; the Holy Spirit requires it; my own conscience requires it; and *your* immortal soul requires it. What more can I say? Did you know my feelings, you would not wonder that I *warned*, *entreated*, and *besought* you to flee from the wrath of God. I must leave the subject for your own reflections, and may God lead you to repentance. But stop, I cannot leave it. Oh, if you could only have heard the sermon I have this evening, I know you would be persuaded of the vast importance of becoming a child of God. The sermon was from Rev. i, 7: 'Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which

pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.' Oh, what a day will be the day of *judgment*, and you and I will meet there; and shall we both, with the remaining members of our dear family, join with our dear brother and sisters who have long ere this entered heaven, in praising Jesus forever and ever. The time is coming, when all shall be converted to Christ, and Satan's kingdom must fall.

I must close. That you may accept of the mercy Christ offers you, and become a subject of the grace of God, is the prayer and desire of your very affectionate but unworthy sister, REBECCA."

"*Providence, Dec.* 5, 1832.

MY DEAR MRS. P.—I suppose you would like to hear something about our beloved Sabbath-school. It is very interesting. There have been but few conversions of late. The teachers appear interested, and many of the scholars do likewise. I have a Bible-class, consisting of eight scholars from twelve to seventeen years old. Some of my class were formerly among your number, if I am not mistaken. One of them trusts she is a child of God, and has united herself to the church. I earnestly hope that it may be my pleasure to know they are all the children of God. To this end, it becomes me to be very faithful; to be instant in season and out of season; to converse very often with them on the subject of their souls' salvation, and pray constantly for them. You probably knew the tract distribution was carried on in Providence. I have been distributer ever since its commencement, which was in April. Much good has resulted from the distribution. There have been several conversions resulting from the tract 'Quench not the Spirit,' and we feel encouraged to continue in this

Young ladies' prayer-meeting on Sabbath noon.

labor of love. Our church are asleep. But very little feeling is manifested, and we have cause to fear we have grieved the Holy Spirit to depart from us. The young ladies' prayer-meetings are held at one o'clock on Sabbath noon, and we have very precious seasons. I trust the Lord approves of the meetings, as he has so abundantly blessed us.

I hope, my dear Mrs. P., you are enjoying the smiles of God, and are living to his glory. May he ever bless you, and grant you his gracious Spirit, that you may 'walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith you are called.'

As I have become a manufacturer of turkies, and it is so near Christmas, I will send you one, which I hope you will accept, in remembrance of your friend,

REBECCA G. R."

"*Providence, Dec.* 20, 1832.
Thursday evening.

It would be unnecessary, my beloved Mary, to say to you that I was happy to receive your dear letter. Nancy kindly brought it to me just before meeting this evening, and there being company present with whom I was obliged to remain, I held the letter some moments and then opened it. But the noise of talking prevented my reading but few lines, and then I was considered extremely impolite, so I placed it in my bosom and went to lecture. Mr. Williams preached a very good discourse, but I did not enjoy it, and I longed to be at home. As soon as I came into the house, I came into the kitchen (where I still remain,) and read the long wished for letter. The sensations which it occasioned were truly *painful*, and not only caused *tears to flow*, but *my heart to ache*. You know full well, dear Mary, the affection which I have ever felt

for you, and it has continued to increase till the present moment of time, and I thank you for that confidence which you have placed in me, in speaking so freely. On that very day you left, which was Wednesday, E. and I took tea at Mrs. H. G.'s, with Rev. Mr. C. and wife, and a few others. I enjoyed myself remarkably well. Talked most of the evening with Mr. Clark. He is very *agreeable* and *sociable*. His conversation was very spiritual, and his advice to me, as a Christian, important, and I hope will prove profitable to me. It was so stormy in the evening, we did not go to the society.

It is perfectly natural that young persons should feel unpleasantly at the thought of a premature death. I think it the duty of every one, to endeavor to secure health, and as anxious as I am for your return (and no one can be more so,) yet I would recommend your staying in the country as long as is considered advisable by your physician, if it will be of any advantage. Do, dear Mary, be prudent, and let me advise you, to do what I know will be a great sacrifice to your feelings,—that is, to give up singing entirely. It is very injurious to lungs that are in the least affected, and I know it must be to you, so do give it up, my dearest girl. If you do not feel the effect immediately, you will at some future time, I fear.

Be assured, dear Mary, I feel deeply interested for you with regard to your health, and wish very much, if it is the will of God, that you may be wholly restored again, and be a blessing to many souls. It is late, so I must bid you good night.

Yours affectionately, REBECCA."

Many of the statements contained in previous chapters are corroborated by allusions in these letters, which, as the

reader perceives, throughout breathes a pious spirit, amid all the simplicity and sportiveness of youthful associations. Some may regret the publication of a few of the paragraphs, as uninteresting, or insipid. The intention, however, to portray character as it *was*, seemed to demand a fair specimen of correspondence at this age. Many memoirs become *false*, from the too refined attempts of the compiler to *improve* his picture by leaving out *parts* of *truth itself*.

CHAPTER VIII.

VISIT TO CANADA IN 1834.

The kind aunt who had, in Rebecca's infancy, rebuked the fears of others by her own prognostication of the child's future usefulness, had removed to Kingston, U. C. The letter dated April 20th, from which the following extracts are taken, was addressed to her.

"You are indeed very kind, dear Aunt, to repeat your invitation to me to visit you this summer. I assure you, it would afford me the highest pleasure to do so; but at present, circumstances are such, I must decline. You are probably well aware, that such a journey would be somewhat expensive, and at this time business is exceedingly dull, and money very scarce; consequently, it would appear inconsiderate in me to expect it. But should these obstacles be removed in the course of the summer, and nothing happen to prevent, I may yet see you."

Affecting scene on leaving Sabbath-school for a season.

These obstacles seem to have soon disappeared, when the subject came up before parental love, for she wrote,—"June 13, 1834. Called at Rev. Mr. Waterman's this morning, and had an exceedingly profitable call. He was very faithful to me, and prayed feelingly for me, in reference to my anticipated journey and absence. I expect to leave for Kingston, U. C., on Wednesday next. I hope I shall see my dear brother, and may I be a blessing to his soul. I met my Sabbath-school, at a weekly interview, this evening. It will be long, if ever, before I meet them again."

On the 15th, (Sabbath,) as she met her class, she could scarcely speak, for deep emotion. She addressed two of them as Christian sisters, and nine as unconverted ones:—"Dear youths, my heart is bound to you. I love you as members of my class. May God make you eminently holy and devoted Christians." It was all she could *say*. She *wrote*, but want of room forbids the transfer of those short touching farewells to this page.

On Wednesday, the 18th, although the rain prevented a farewell call, waving handkerchiefs and tears told her of the affection of some of that class, by whose windows she was carried to the steamboat for Newport.

No effort will be made in the narrative which follows, to present the charm of romantic adventure to the reader. But the Christian traveller, it is hoped, will be seen at every opportunity seeking to honor her Redeemer, and save souls.

It rained violently when, at a little past two, she went on board the steamboat at Newport, and a detention of some hours ensued in consequence of fog. The passengers, debarred from the deck by the storm, saw a young lady busily engaged in reading. Soon she laid down the

Tracts introduced to notice of others, in a steamboat, by reading them.

paper, and took up another. To relieve ennui, that which she had read was perused by a fellow-traveller. Several ladies were thus supplied with religious tracts, which continued to be taken up by successive individuals after the motion of the boat drove their owner to her birth.

On arriving at New York, and meeting her father there, she rejoiced in an opportunity to retire where she could express her gratitude to her Preserver, and the occurrence of a violent thunder-storm while waiting for passage to Albany, enabled her to refer others, in conversation, to that source whence her own peace was derived. In consequence of a breakage in the canal, she was unable to spend a quiet Sabbath at Syracuse, as was intended. She had made special provision for so keeping the Sabbath, by previous agreement with the company with which she travelled. Thus far all had been enjoyment. Alive to the beauties of the scenery around her, she had given herself up to the influence of what she saw. Herself enraptured, there were those in the steamer, the cars, and the canal-boat, who found in the vivacity of her conversation a charm enhancing the joy of the opening season. "The evening scenery of the Hudson was too attractive to be lost till darkness shut it all out." "On the canal-boat" she "was perfectly delighted," and her minute description of what she noted shows that she was alive to all she saw, whether moved by pity for vagrants, or to admiration by works of art.

At Syracuse, for the first time, she "enjoyed a season of prayer without interruption, on retiring to rest on Saturday evening." Early on the following morning, she was upon her knees, "thanking God that she was not compelled to travel on his holy day, and for the anticipated pleasure of attending the worship of the sanctuary." With such a

"Compelled to violate the Sabbath by decision of others."

prospect she breakfasted. But the friend, under whose care she travelled, "came in soon, and said there was a canal packet-boat to start at eight from Salina, and no other would be able to leave till Wednesday or Thursday, in consequence of the breakage which had detained the other boats below, and several days would be needed to effect repairs. He could not be detained all that time in Syracuse. His business demanded his going on." All which she could properly do, to persuade the company to remain, was done; yet they decided to go on. What could she do? She wrote to her mother respecting it:—

"Oh how trying; I had rather have staid there a fortnight, than to break God's day by travelling. He had kindly preserved and taken care of us during our journey, and suffered no accident to befal us. I could not bear to treat him so, in return for this kindness. But I could do nothing. I urged them to remain, telling them some way would be provided for us on Monday. But all I could say was of no avail; go we *must*, and go we did. We had a carriage and road to Salina."

"On board the Great Britain," in which she crossed the lake to Kingston, "she enjoyed much in meditating upon God. All nature seemed to say, Praise ye the Lord." She could not repress her desire, that all the multitude on board should respond, "The Lord's name be praised." "Rejoiced to see the dear relatives at Kingston, it was a privilege to find" her "closet there," and it was one of her first efforts to seek it, and commune with God. She was very anxious to inquire after the religious privileges of Kingston, and made it a point, so far as possible, to enjoy them all. She remembered those which she had left behind at Providence, as their regular times occurred. While her fellow-teachers in the Sabbath-school were en-

gaged in their weekly meeting for prayer, she was on her knees, pleading "that God would bless them, and prepare them for the duties of the Sabbath." Nor could she refrain from endeavoring, by letter, to continue to exert a religious influence at home. While continually receiving calls, and visiting new and old acquaintances, she found time, during her stay in Canada, for writing a very large number of letters, from which the following are selected. The first was addressed to a young lady for whom she felt peculiar attachment as a relative.

"*June* 28, 1834.

MY VERY DEAR ——,—You will probably attend Grace church tomorrow, and all the rest of the family Mr. Wilson's. I will think of you. Hope you will have good sermons, and profitable ones. In order to have preaching profitable, you ought to make it a special subject of prayer previous to going. Ministers need our prayers. They are feeble it is true, but feeble prayer brings down many blessings. I think much of you in reference to your religious experience. You are very dear to me. You are young. Surrounded as you are by the temptations of a giddy world, you need constant watchfulness and prayer. Your heart is like all others, deceitful, and oftentimes you suppose you are tolerably good, perhaps good enough; while this is but the evil suggestion of Satan, that *enemy* of souls,—yes, that *destroyer* of souls. Self-examination you will find a most important duty, and a very profitable one. Practice it daily, and you will be a growing Christian. I love to see a person grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Master. I love to see a holy example; yes, I love to know a Christian by his or her fruits. Are you a prayerful Christian? How often during the day are you

upon your knees before God, pleading for a dying world. I would ask if one hour in twenty-four is thus spent? Let conscience answer. Do you, dear ——, study God's word daily? If you would be eminently holy, let this be your guide,—read it, and study it, and pray over it. If you are a Christian, dear ——, you will, I am sure, receive these few remarks kindly, for I intend them for your good, and when you write me, tell me your feelings exactly. Feel no restraint. I wish to know your feelings, and what I ought to do, and how I ought to live, in your estimation. I will thank you for it. I would remind you, not to think too much of your minister. You have a good one I know, but trust not to him. Pray for me, dear ——. I rejoice that I can ask such a favor of you. I love to engage the prayers of my dear friends, and they shall share in mine. Do write me often. I shall expect a letter every week, as long as I remain here, and will write you as often. With love, I am as ever,

Your affectionate, but unworthy,

REBECCA G. R."

"*Kingston, July* 1, 1834.

BELOVED FATHER,—I will not let George return to New York, without writing you a few lines. I have been writing to Elizabeth, and Louisa, and do not know as I can say any thing to interest you, unless it is to express to you my gratitude for your kindness, in permitting me to visit Canada. I have been thinking this morning, my dear Father, about our dear family,—that God has blest me with the *kindest* and most indulgent parents, tender and affectionate sisters, and dearly-beloved brothers,—and how ungrateful I have been for these great blessings. I have realized more the worth of my dear friends since our sepa-

ration, than ever before. To you, dear Father, and my dear mother, I am deeply indebted, and never, while time endures, shall I be able to repay you for your kindness to me. I am sensible that I have often grieved you, by disobedience, and indulgence in my selfish disposition, for which I would heartily repent, and humbly ask your forgiveness; and should God permit me to return to you, I will endeavor to be more affectionate and dutiful. Do write to me, dear Father; think much of me while absent, and pray for me, for I am a poor frail creature, exposed to temptations, and too easily led to yield to them. I have written once to mother, and shall have no time to write now. Do give my best love to her, and ask her to write to me.

I am as ever, your affectionate, but unworthy daughter,

REBECCA."

"*Kingston, July* 4, 1834.

Friday morning.

DEAR ——,—I think I will not be ceremonious enough to wait for you to write me, although I did not design writing to any of my friends until I received letters from them. I will not fill my paper with an account of my journey to Canada, but will refer you to our family for particulars. I am very fond of journeying, and visiting my dear friends, notwithstanding I am so much attached to my dear home. I am pleased with my Canadian friends, although I do not think them as social, or affable, as the Rhode-Islanders. I have become acquainted with quite a number of individuals, of both sexes, among them ——, who is a young unmarried man. He is an Englishman, and I think far more suitable for you than the reverend gentleman whom we saw at Mr. ——'s. How would you

like —— as a residence? The place is pleasantly situated on the river St. Lawrence, and has a population of about 5,000. Here you might exert a very good influence, were you to become the companion of Mr. ——. Perhaps you are ready to ask, why I do not fancy him myself. I will tell you. He does not *suit* my fancy. If you please I will inform him there is such a lady in Providence, tell him what qualifications you possess requisite for a ——'s wife, you age, &c. &c., and tell you at some future time the result of the conversation.

I cannot interest you, dear ——, by writing any thing about Kingston, I wish I could; but when *you* write, you can interest me,—for any thing relating to Providence will always be interesting.

I have always supposed, that in travelling, the mind must necessarily become dissipated; but I found it was wholly unnecessary. If we keep an eye on Christ, it is all we need to do. We should be able then to say, with the Psalmist, "My heart is fixed,"—"My heart is fixed." It is not only difficult, but impossible, to retire for prayer on board of steamboats, or canal-boats, and I feel truly thankful to God, that he would hear my feeble prayers, although deprived the privilege of retiring.

I have not forgotten Mr. Waterman's kind advice and prayer,—but hope to profit by them. That morning call will long be remembered, I trust. How I wish I could see him; remember me to him, when you call with your tracts, and if Mrs. W. has returned, give my best love to her—dear woman, I love her. Presume you have not yet commenced distributing *my tracts*. Be faithful, dear ——, and so speak, look, think, and act, as to clear the skirts of your garments from the blood of souls. I dreamed last night of meeting you in the Sabbath-school, where we have

often met, and where I hope we shall again meet. I have not the privilege of attending a Sabbath-school here, for I am about two miles from the church. I wish I could go, and have a class.

I would love to write more, but have not the time, so must defer it. Do let me hear from you. My best love to your dear mother, Mary, and Charles,—and to all other dear friends.

In great haste, I am as ever, yours affectionately,

REBECCA."

"*Cape Vincent, July* 28, 1834.

EVER DEAR SISTER,—I have heretofore been very systematic in my letters home. I would wish not to be any less so at this time, and consequently shall tell you how I have passed my time since I wrote you last, which was on the 15th. * * * *

Report, on Tuesday, that there were from thirty to forty deaths per day, at Montreal and Quebec, of cholera. Wednesday, 23d, arose with the sun,—busied myself with household affairs until seven,—breakfasted at five and a half. H. A. and myself walked into K. at seven,—went immediately on board the steamboat 'Black Hawk,' for Cape Vincent. Several gentlemen came on board to see us. Did not start till quarter before nine. Few passengers,—fine boat,—and swift sail. Went by way of the Lake; passed through Batto Channel; had a pleasant sail of twenty-five miles; quite sea-sick, but remained on deck,—would not yield to my feelings. Arrived at Cape Vincent at quarter past eleven. Found Mr. R. on the wharf. He walked out to Mr. D.'s with us, half a mile from the village. They all appeared very glad to see us. Mr. D. has a fine cottage, fronting the river St. Lawrence, very

near the shore. It is delightfully situated. We were invited to dine out that very day, but were too much fatigued.

Thursday there were two severe thunder showers, one in the morning, and the other at evening. The lightning struck a store in Kingston, and burnt it. Mrs. H. called on us, and invited us to pass Saturday with her. She lives two miles from here. After tea, A. H. and myself walked into the village; went to the Post-office; no letters; disappointed.

Saturday, at half past nine, Mr. R. called with a stage, to take us all down to Mr. H.'s; we were in readiness; arrived there before ten. At sunset, the stage came again for us, to convey us home. On our way down, stopped at the Office, and found several letters for our company; and how eagerly did I seize the one directed to R. G. Russell. I opened it in the stage, and saw it was the hand-writing of my own dear sister. How delighted I was no one can tell. I could not read it there of course, and as soon as I reached Mr. H.'s, I read it. It was just long enough. Accept a thousand thanks, dear E., for it.

Sunday, arose late; at half past ten attended church. It is half a mile from here. The church is still unfinished; no pews, nothing but slips. It is a Presbyterian church, and the only church in the place. It was built one year since. Previous to that time, there was no church in the place; and Cape Vincent was settled fifteen years ago. There are from three hundred to four hundred inhabitants, and from fifty to sixty families. There were only about eighty persons at church yesterday. Mr. C. is the pastor. His text yesterday was, 'The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.' He was formerly an infidel. I was introduced to him. Took a lunch immediately after; dined

Sabbath desecrated by French population.

at six o'clock. Mr. —— dined here, and passed the evening. In the evening several French gentlemen called. Oh, what an evening. They had several *songs*, but how shocking. Oh, I will tell you all about it when I see you. This is a very wicked place; great many French, who consider the Sabbath a day of amusement, and spend it in hunting, fishing, gambling, dancing, drinking, &c. &c. Why here comes ——. He arrived with K. this morning, and came immediately over here. How glad I am to see him. But what painful intelligence does he bring us. The cholera is raging in Kingston; it broke out there yesterday; a number of cases, and seven deaths yesterday,—one of which was Mr. Wellington Turpin, (a brother of Mr. Lamb). I was well acquainted with him,—lived next house to uncle's. He was not very well on Saturday afternoon; at night ate cucumbers. Yesterday, while his friends had gone to church in the morning, he was violently attacked with the cholera; and when they returned, he was almost dead; died at half past five, at evening. He was a very fine young man, very enterprising, and will be a great loss. He was about twenty-two; was studying physic. A great shock to his friends. They thought *too* much of him. When I heard it, I was so much affected that I did not know what to do; but I am thankful we had left there. This is a very healthy place, and when the cholera raged, two years since, there was not a case here; so I feel almost as safe as if at home. I believe Mr. Turpin was the only respectable one who has here died; the rest were degraded persons, who probably brought it on by intemperance. Robert brought me a good bundle of letters. Oh, if I ever was *thankful* for any thing, I was of them. Do thank my dear parents, sisters, and friends, for being so kind; and, if possible, I will answer some or all

Remembrance of sermons heard at home.

of them. I think it will not be possible, however. I cannot write here as if I were at home.

I think you could not have enjoyed the fourth of July very much, from your description of the anti-slavery meetings. They ought to have been interesting, I think. The subject is so important. You asked if I would scold at you for showing my first letter; generally speaking, I should; but as that was merely a description of my journey, and would naturally interest those who are *my* friends, I will not; but be careful not to show any more; you showed it to quite a number, I think, but I will excuse you this time. The family, you say, seems very small; it is indeed so, and now L. has gone, it is still less. If she has as fine a day as we have, she will enjoy it.

When you see Mr. and Mrs. W. again, tell him I have heard him preach several sermons since I came here; they are the notes I have taken, and copied in my journal. I love to read them over. In yours, you said he requested me to read the 131st Psalm, and if that was not suitable, he would send me another. That is not applicable to my case. I regret to say it, but it is the truth. Ma's letter said, he requested the 121st Psalm to be read. That, I think, is the one he intended me to read, as he mentioned the same when I last saw him.

Your affectionate sister, R."

"*Cape Vincent, Aug.* 3, 1834.

MY DEAR SISTER,—Gladly do I take my pen, to address you again, on paper. How thankful we ought to be, dearest E., for the art of writing. I am sure I feel thankful for such an invention; for our separation, at this time, would be peculiarly painful, were we not allowed the privilege of *writing to*, and *receiving letters from* each other.

Dearest sister, what an unspeakable blessing.—This is the Sabbath day,—

'Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.'

You are now in the dear little chapel, standing before those whom it is your duty to instruct,—teaching those dear infants the knowledge of God. I wish I could look in upon you. Soon you are to enter the church of God. Presume you will hear Rev. Mr. Waterman,—(hear for me too). If you do, you will hear a faithful sermon. I am not going to church this morning. Aunt Martha, and Eliza, are preparing to go, but I remain. It is too far to walk, so warm a day, into the village twice, unless you are to hear a *very good sermon*,—so I wait until afternoon. How much I miss my Sabbath-school. I dreamed of my class last night,—thought they were scattered; am glad to believe this is not the fact. Mr. Elliott is undoubtedly *more* faithful than I have ever been. May God smile upon his efforts, and save the souls of that dear, *dear class*. Do give my very best love to them; tell them I think very much of them, and want to see them, exceedingly; tell them they are often carried to the 'throne of grace,' in my feeble petitions. They will probably see me, if God permit, in a *few* Sabbaths. My district, as a tract distributer, I also miss exceedingly. I am glad I have so faithful a person to take the district. I wish I could see *some* of these families, particularly Mrs. W.'s family. How long since I saw her.

We know how anxious you must feel about us, in regard to the cholera. When I wrote last, I mentioned it had very much abated. For two or three days we had no report from K. Yesterday, a gentleman told me he had seen some one from K., who reported fourteen deaths on

A "deacon's meeting."

Friday, and he said there was much alarm in K. on Friday evening and Saturday morning; but yesterday afternoon, the alarm had subsided,—said there were seven or eight deaths yesterday morning. To-day, no report as yet. I know how you all feel, by this time, about us. We do not feel alarmed ourselves, excepting on account of our friends at home, who we know feel alarmed about us. Presume it is as healthy, or more so, here, than with you, as you have so many cases of the small-pox. Hope all of you will escape that dreadful disorder.

Monday, 4th. Yesterday afternoon went into the Sabbath-school, at one o'clock. It is very small,—eight teachers, forty scholars. Attended church in the afternoon. The minister remarked, he was not well enough to preach, and deacon Conveis would read a sermon; so he went into the pulpit and read it. It was very good.

In the evening, we all sat down, and made arrangements about returning home. Soon I hope you will see, once more, REBECCA."

"MY DEAREST FATHER, MOTHER, AND SISTERS,—As this will be the last time I shall write home, before I see you, I will write to you *all*, and then shall not be considered *partial*. I sent a letter to Elizabeth, by Tuesday's mail, and promised to send another by the mail of Friday; consequently have seated myself at the table alone in the parlor, and shall not be liable to interruption. If any thing has afforded me pleasure, since I left home, it has been to write to *you my dearest friends*.

I am very sorry to hear the *cholera* has appeared in Providence. Elizabeth mentioned, 'there had been several cases in P., but they were not generally reported.' She did not mention whether there were any *deaths*, and I

Sin the cause of the epidemic in Providence.

should suppose, from her manner of writing, there was no alarm about it. She mentioned Mrs. Snow had had it, but not severely. It is a most dreadful disorder, and I verily believe is sent on account of the sins of our city. I believe prayer will alone remove it. Oh, be earnest, dear friends, in prayer, which 'makes the darkened cloud withdraw.' You will wish to know the health of Kingston. Uncle received a letter from cousin William this morning, in which he states, that, on Tuesday, the 9th, there were more deaths than *ever* before of cholera; eighteen interments. Yesterday, at eight o'clock in the morning, he had heard of but two or three deaths during the night, and three or four cases. Some days it rages there to an alarming extent.

And has my dear mother been sick? Oh, could I have been with her. I regret exceedingly I was absent, for I always wish to be at home when any of our dear family are ill, that, if it be possible for me in any way to alleviate their sufferings, I may seek to do it. Surely our *dear*, *dear* family have been afflicted since I saw them,—dear mother particularly; but I hope, sincerely, she has recovered, and her health is quite established. I am rejoiced to hear, dearest father has so nearly recovered his cough, and is better than he has been for a long time. Are my dear sisters, Anna, and Elizabeth, well? I *flatter* myself they are. But why do I thus flatter myself? It is because I should be *unhappy* to hear any more of you were ill, and *should* actually be *homesick*. I will therefore imagine (and I hope not wrongly) that father has recovered from his cough, and that mother is now *quite well*, and that my dear E. and A. are in perfect health."

(This letter closes with a statement of arrangements for her journey home.)

Satisfaction in receiving letters while journeying.

"*Cape Vincent, Aug.* 4, 1834.
Monday afternoon.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Imagine the pleasure it afforded me, on the arrival of my cousin, to receive a package containing thirteen letters, upon all of which I recognized the hand-writing of some well-known friend. I sincerely thank you, dear friend, for your kindness in writing me; it afforded me great pleasure to hear from you. You say you know from experience the pleasure it affords me, when absent from home, to receive letters from those we love. Surely there can be no *greater* pleasure, when so far separated from our dearest earthly friends, than to receive a letter occasionally;—at least I think so. It is now nearly seven weeks since I left home, (the longest time I have ever been absent,) during which time I have passed through various scenes, seen many countenances which I shall never more see in the flesh, and heard some voices which are now silent in death.—I remained in Kingston four weeks with my friends,—my uncle's residence is about a mile and a half from the town, which is very pleasantly situated, commanding a fine view of the river St. Lawrence. I cannot say I am much pleased with the appearance of Kingston; should think, by the description I have heard of Newport, it resembled that place. We left Kingston, on the 23d of July, for Cape Vincent, where we shall probably remain until we start for home. We had intended to return to K., and pass a few weeks, after spending a fortnight here; but the appearance of 'the pestilence which walketh in darkness, and the destruction which wasteth at noon-day,' will prevent our returning there. The first cases of cholera in K. were on Sunday, the 27th, since which time more than seventy deaths have occurred; consequently we think it advisable

not to return there.—In regard to my religious privileges, I can say but very little. They have been *few* indeed. I have not heard a *good sermon* since I left home, and only had the privilege of attending *one* evening meeting; and, as you may well suppose, I consider them to be a *very great loss*. Still I feel very grateful to my Heavenly Father, that my spiritual enjoyment does not *depend* on my religious privileges. During my journey, I felt a blessed assurance that Jesus was with me, granting me the holy influences of his Spirit. I could cast all my care upon *him*, and feel that he 'cared for me.'

You probably recollect of telling me, just before I left home, that 'in order to prevent the mind from becoming dissipated, we must keep an eye on Christ.' Thank you, dear brother, for this *one* remark. I remembered it, and it proved a blessing to me. Thus you see, a single remark is often a lasting blessing. You speak of Canada as a 'heathen country,' surely it is so. *Very* few in K. love the Redeemer; some dishonor him by an *unholy* example. I have seen enough to convince me, that the opportunity of doing good is very great. Oh, if they were only blest with a faithful ministry. The pastors are generally *uneducated*, and not spiritual. Never have I heard them, on the Sabbath, offer a prayer for their own churches. How singular. It gives one reason to suppose they feel no *interest* in their church. Yesterday, one of the deacons of the church in this place, was called upon to *read* a sermon, as the minister was unable to preach. The sermon, it is true, was very good, from the text 'Behold how he loved him.' But what effect could it have upon the congregation, read as if it were a school-boy's lesson? Several arose and left the church, when they found a sermon was to be read. I attended the Sabbath-school yesterday; it

is very small,—consists of eight teachers, and forty scholars. It did not appear very interesting. I have not yet read James B. Taylor's life; I carelessly left the book in my trunk at Kingston; I supposed I should not be able to read it here, as I had the 'Young Christian,' and thought I would leave it there, and read it when I returned to K. The trunk will be brought over this week, and if I do not find time to read it here, shall find it a pleasant companion on my way home. I find but very little time to read, except on the Sabbath, and of course then I cannot read a great deal.

Believe me, your affectionate friend,

REBECCA G. R."

The following are extracts from different letters, and from her journal:—

"Tuesday, Aug. 12. How gratifying, just as I was to start for home, to receive a letter, to cheer me on my way.

Wednesday, 13th. Nine passengers in the stage for Utica; one was very disagreeable,—endeavored to amuse us with telling stories, but he quite disgusted us, and we finally took no notice of him. Never did I feel so much fatigued. I felt very unpleasantly, on leaving my friends, to whom I had become much attached.

On the 14th, had a severe hail-storm, at five o'clock, P. M., attended with thunder and lightning. The stones picked up in the boat were as large as walnuts. The evening was delightful; retired at ten o'clock; did not sleep much. The ladies' talking, and babies' crying, were rather annoying. Was delighted with the appearance of the Catskill Mountains, and of the mountain-house, which is on an elevation of 2,214 feet above the Hudson, and com-

Spends Sabbath alone, at New York, rather than return on that day.

mands the most extensive and romantic prospect in America. While admiring the works of nature, I looked through nature up to nature's God."

A gentleman, whose family was in company with her returning from Canada, has been induced, by the impression then made upon his mind, to forward the following statement, as an illustration of "Mrs. Webster's great reverence for the Sabbath. She arrived at New York on a Saturday morning, when the cholera was at its height there, and when all who could avoid the city did so. My wife and family left the same afternoon for Providence. But she was so scrupulous in her observance of the Sabbath, that she would not even encroach upon it by arriving at home at five o'clock in the morning of that day, and preferred remaining in New York, at a boarding-house alone, and among strangers, from Saturday morning until Monday evening, when the cholera was raging around her, and when the inhabitants were pressing from the city."

It is needless to attempt a description of the anxiety of her family respecting her, at that time. Day by day appalling news came of the ravages of the epidemic in New York. She must pass through the midst of that danger. But on Saturday they fondly hoped to see her at the breakfast table on the next morning. Her father rises with the dawn. As the hour of five approaches, he hastens to the wharf. The boat is in sight. She wears up. The plank falls. The passengers crowd forth, and he watches in breathless suspense, but his Rebecca is not there. He receives her message, "I could not bear to travel on God's day, when he has been so kind to me." It was a day in which the household sought, in fear, for his protection upon the child, the sister, who had thus placed her safety in his hands in obedient faith.

Views respecting closing city churches in August.

Let us turn to her, in her solitude. She is in her quiet chamber, "passing the evening very pleasantly, in reading the Bible, prayer, and perusing the Memoir of James B. Taylor." She "was greatly struck with his example, and resolved to follow it; and accordingly committed that evening a part of the fourteenth chapter of John." She copied some parts of his conversation. She wrote, as she closed the book, "I sincerely hope I shall profit by this interesting work. May God bless it to me, is, and shall be my prayer. Blessed Jesus, grant me thy Spirit."

The following memorandum of the next day was left among her papers:—

"Sabbath, Aug. 17, 1834. At New York. The Sabbath is now nearly past. The last rays of the setting sun gild the horizon. I am seated at my window, in the fourth story of the house, quite alone, and yet not alone,—I have the presence of one, whose presence is life, even Jesus, the Saviour. How sweet his presence,—how delightful, how comforting his promise, 'I am with you till the world shall end.' I had a pleasant season of prayer this morning; thanks to Jesus that we *can* pray. Blessed be his name, for his unspeakable blessings. At half past ten, cousin George called, to attend church with me. We first went to Dr. Spring's church,—it was *closed;* then to the 'Middle Dutch Reformed,'—it was *closed;* then to the 'South Baptist,'—it was *closed;* and finally succeeded in gaining admittance to the 'Dutch Reformed Church, in Nassau-street,'—where we heard Rev. Dr. Knox preach from Heb. xiii, 8: 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.' Very good discourse. A large number of the churches in the city are *closed.* In August the ministers travel, and have their churches closed,—which I think very wrong."

Influence left behind her on a dying friend.

She reached home on Tuesday morning, and was eager, that very day, to see the sick and infirm of her friends, and at once resumed the active efforts to which attention has been already called, as a Sabbath-school teacher, tract distributer, etc. We must, however, before we leave this chapter, introduce the statement of a witness to her example while in Canada, which has been kindly furnished to the compiler.

"*Cape Vincent, July* 20, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR,—We know full well the companion and child of Rebecca. Her many relatives and friends, and the members of her husband's parish, have sustained a severe loss. We knew her faultless character; her unceasing aim to be useful, and to do good; and we feel that loss to be irreparable. And we are not surprised, friends should wish to have before them the details of her 'daily walk and conversation,' of her lovely Christian life, which left an impression on all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance.

Friends who had visited at her father's house, spoke of her devoted piety, of her consistency in religion, of her unceasing zeal in the cause of Christ. Her visit to Canada was at ——'s house. There were young and gay friends visiting also at the house, who were uninterested in religion, and ever disposed to avoid professors; but who were led to admire and love Rebecca, for her lovely Christian character, and the impression which she left upon the mind of one was so strong, that when, a few months since, she was stretched upon her dying bed, at sight of me, she desired to know, how one who had lived as Mrs. Webster, in such close communion with her Saviour, had yielded her spirit."

Her discussion with a Romanist.

The compiler has also before him, an interesting narrative of a discussion which Mrs. Webster held, at repeated interviews, with a Romanist, who was drawn into it by her mild rebuke of the idolatry of bowing to saints. She is represented, as having been constantly seeking happy methods of giving saving truth an attractive position before the eyes of those of her friends who knew not her Redeemer. The following instance is recorded by a fellow-visiter at that time :—

"She requested a gentleman, who was a sceptic, to read a work of some length upon religious subjects. He was one who never looked into a serious book, but her kind and gentle manners won his esteem, and he promised to examine the book; and he afterward told me every page was read."

The same writer adds:—"Canadians are a different people from your good New Englanders, and, as a Presbyterian minister remarked in Kingston, 'an obstinate people;' and Rebecca, with her discerning eye, saw this was the case; that the first step was to win their love. She succeeded in doing this, and had her visit not been shortened, she might have been very useful."

Her style of conversation with intimate Christian friends, is exhibited in the following extract from a letter which refers to this short residence in Canada:—

"We were very dear friends, children together. Rebecca and myself were inmates of the same house several years, and could see each others faults. After she had been a professor a few years, we met," (this meeting was at their friends in Canada,) "and conversed freely upon by-gone days, and she brought to my recollection some childish imperfections, which she had, as a Christian, been compelled to strive against. In my admiration of her

Subsequent allusion to her journey.

saint-like character, I had forgotten she ever possessed faults incident to our nature; but she knew my feelings, and wished me to understand she had temptations, and that to resist them she was obliged to watch and pray."

Mrs. Webster's own subsequent feelings, in regard to this journey, are thus expressed:—

"I need not tell you, my dearest aunt, how delightfully I passed my time at your house, for I am sure you must know it. I enjoyed my visit exceedingly, and feel very grateful to you and my dear uncle, for your unwearied kindness. Never shall I forget it."

She is said to have been regarded at this time as a very *cheerful* as well as consistent Christian. Her view of such cheerfulness are explained in the following, in a letter written near this date:—

"You ask, dear C., in your last, if 'I think cheerfulness sinful?' I very readily answer no, and can say with you, 'Who should be so habitually cheerful as the Christian?' Show me any thing but a gloomy Christian. Religion never makes a man sad and gloomy, but the want of it often does. If a Christian is unhappy, who then *can* be happy? Is the infidel happy? Ah, no; witness the hour of his death, and he will tell you he never *was* happy. Is the self-righteous man happy? Is the moralist happy? No, *they* are not happy. But the truly devoted, self-denying, humble follower of Jesus *is* happy. He possesses that within his breast which will buoy up his spirits under all affliction, and be as an 'anchor to his soul, sure and steadfast.' His motto is, 'For me to live is Christ;' and he writes 'holiness to the Lord, on his time, talents, attainments, influence, business, pleasure, and his all.' 'Consecrated to the interests of God's eternal government, she writes upon her soul and body, and lays them at the

feet of Jesus.' 'May the joys, and triumphs, and future glories of such consecration be yours; it will sustain you in life, death, and be all beyond.' You likewise expressed a wish to become a Christian. What could so rejoice my heart as to know you had indeed become one. If religion is worth possessing, is it not worth possessing now?"

CHAPTER IX.

VIEWS AND CONDUCT AT THE FORMATION OF HIGH-STREET CHURCH.

Miss Russell had long been regarded as almost deserving of censure, by members of the church with which she was connected, because she so frequently worshipped with another congregation. Truth to her memory, in relation to this conduct, and also as inclining her to leave that church, demands a full statement of facts on this subject. And this cannot be made without first placing before the reader, a brief sketch of Rev. Mr. Wilson's life and style of preaching, etc. The following facts, kindly furnished by his son-in-law, Rev. J. F. Fillmore, may serve to explain *why* his sermons, near the close of his life, were not always adapted to interest and satisfy a young and studious Christian.

"From a manuscript, in Mr. Wilson's own hand-writing, I learn that he was born at Limerick, in Ireland, March 12th, A. D. 1760. Mr. Wilson says, in this paper,—

'One day, at about fifteen, returning from a morning meeting, (he can never forget the spot,) when passing over Ball's bridge, an inward silent voice, yet distinct and intelligent, as if audible, spoke within him, saying, "Thou shalt bear my name before many." He paused; he knew the voice, he understood what it meant; he had heard it before, but never before to signify the same thing. He now knew it meant he should become a preacher of the gospel, and that it would become his duty to prepare, and hold himself in readiness when that time should come.' At Abington, a few miles from Limerick, the first Sabbath in May, 1783, he attempted, for the first time, to preach; and one young person was 'deeply awakened,' as he was informed, on visiting there the next Sabbath for the same purpose. 'After his second visit, various openings presented, with warm invitations to accept them;' and in a few months he was regularly employed, by the appointment or direction of Mr. Wesley. Mr. Wilson was married July 28, 1785; and on March 9, 1791, embarked with his family for America; but being detained by contrary winds, they did not weigh anchor until the 19th; and after a dangerous voyage, on the night of the 21st of May, cast anchor opposite Newport, and next day arrived in Providence. He soon after was invited to preach, which he did, for Rev. Mr. Snow, on Friday evening, May 27, 1791, and was soon after engaged as an assistant. He says, 'On Sunday, July 17th, I preached the first time, as an assistant to Mr. Snow; and on Monday, July 25th, commenced teaching a school, with about forty scholars.' He taught a school in connection with his ministry thirteen years; and this was one reason for the deep interest he ever felt for the young.

A young college student, on first coming to Providence, in 1832, was inquiring of a friend who then held a distinguished position in public life, "who the several preachers were." After a description of the others, Mr. Wilson was named, "as a Methodist pastor of an orthodox Congregational church."

The following published remarks of his own, show that he wished much to avoid denominational divisions.

"More than fifty years have I been appointed to labor in Christ's vineyard—of which eight were spent in the Wesleyan connection, in Ireland, and upwards of forty-three in the Beneficent Congregational Church and Society in Providence. In 1793, I became, by ordination, inducted into the order of a Congregational Pastor of New-England. My convictions of the scriptural propriety of that order, have never been shaken. But still I have ever believed that other Christians might be as truly devout and holy as Congregationalists; and to me it is ever matter of deep regret, to discover in any that extravagance of sectarianism, which attempts to amalgamate all sects into one ecclesiastical body; and no less matter of regret, to discover that bitterness of false zeal, which slanders and persecutes as heretics, all who differ from their opinion on some favorite point. Let these two portions of zealots but unite in one body, and thereby become dominant over all others, then, like old mother Rome, will they institute inquisitions, and soon resort—if the civil authority should not interfere—to fire and faggots, to racks and tortures. Strongly attached to the order in which I still hold a standing, having frequently acted in their Ecclesiastical Councils, and still oftener in their Associations—but ever opposed to Consociations, as destructive of the rights of the churches—I feel concerned for whatever injures it. That

a deep wound is inflicted on Congregationalists, in respect to doctrines, cannot with a good grace be denied. Not, indeed, that I regret increasing disbelief of the unconditional decrees of reprobation; but that Socinian and Priestleyan tenets, have so far and so fatally infused their poisonous leaven into many of our pulpits, churches, and congregations, as to exclude from many of them due confidence in the Holy Scriptures; and that from hence has followed the rejection of Christ and his hallowed Cross, as well as the neglect, if not even the denial, of the Holy Spirit, in his regenerating and sanctifying influences."

As he is distinctly charged, by Miss Russell, in the following letters, with preaching erroneous views, justice to his memory, as well as to hers, demands the insertion of a specimen of his doctrinal style, which being somewhat obscure, might be misunderstood by such a hearer.

"Thrice in the former section, we noticed Christ being called the Image of GOD; but it was, in each instance, the Son in the image of his Father. In 2 Cor. iv, 4, he is asserted to be the image of GOD; in Phil. ii, 6, he is said to be in the form of GOD; in Col. i, 15, he is called the image of the *invisible* GOD; and in Heb. i, 3, he is styled the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express *image* of his person. The *invisibility* of GOD is strongly intimated in Exodus xxxiii, 20, where GOD declares that no man shall see his face and live. But it is more strongly declared in John i, 18: 'No man hath seen GOD at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' But the Son, although in various respects the image of the Father, is in other respects unlike him. He is not, like the Father, invisible; nor did the Father ever, like Christ, have a Father, or be himself a Son. '*I and my Father* ARE ONE.' This *one*

ness or *unity* of the *Father* and *Son*, is often perverted and misunderstood. They are not one personally; but are one in respect to unity of design, effort, and object, each and both combined to secure the salvation of faithful, obedient believers."

Whether she did really yield to unjust prejudices or not, the reader must judge for himself, after reading the following additional extracts from Mr. Wilson's published views:—

"*Priestly*, *Belsham*, and others, have together, *in concert*, raved, railed, and blasphemed, like the unbelieving Jews, the Lord of life and glory. And however on some trivial points they may have dissented from each other, still on one of supreme importance they adhere firmly together, even in the denial of atonement for sin by Christ's death, which they uniformly reject. Hoping, independent of Christ, to obtain heaven and happiness, they are in his estimation regarded only as *thieves* and *robbers*.

Could that distinguished gentleman, and admired writer, Dr. Channing, be exonerated from participation in the anti-Christian tenets of the persons last adverted to, it would be truly gratifying to multitudes, because of his known talents, the urbanity of his character, and his great opportunities of reading and research. But his philippic, in reference to Calvary and the Cross, utterly demolishes every such expectation. What he has written on this subject, may be found in his works, pages 423 and 425. 'Suppose (says he) that a teacher should come among you, and should tell you that the Creator, in order to pardon his own children, had erected a gallows in the centre of the universe, and had publicly executed upon it, in room of the offenders, an infinite Being, the partner of his own Supreme Divinity: suppose him to declare that the execution was appointed, as a most conspicuous and terrible manifestation

of God's justice, and of the infinite wo denounced by his law; and suppose him to add, that all beings in heaven, and in earth, are required to fix their eyes on this fearful sight, as the most powerful enforcement of obedience and virtue. Would you not say to him, that he calumniated his Maker? Would you not say to him, that this central gallows threw gloom over the universe? That the spirit of a government whose very acts of pardon were written in blood, was terror, not paternal love; and that the obedience which needed to be upheld by this horrid spectacle, was nothing worth?'

It is not without an effort that the just indignation can be suppressed, which naturally arises where such glaring and slanderous insult is openly cast on the most sacred and hallowed of all causes, that of God having given his only begotten Son, out of his own bosom, to seek and save, by his death and resurrection, all of a lost world, who, believing on him, should thereby obtain salvation from death eternal. If the Doctor acted under no impulse but to serve the cause of truth, in his opposition to atonement for sin by Christ's crucifixion, why was he not equally zealous in behalf of divine truth, by exposing and repelling the ignominy cast by Belsham on God and his government, by an open declaration that God is the author of sin, or moral evil; and by accusing the Creator of such impotence, that he was unable to effect the good he designed, without first stooping to excite and pervert his own *children* into rebellion against himself and his government, to become the pander of their lusts, that he might afterwards have the pleasure of reclaiming them, not by the barbarous act of crucifying his Son for them, but by the infliction of stripes, few or many, on the culprits themselves, as the several cases of discipline might require?"

Witnesses baptism of one of her Sabbath-school class.

The following extracts from her journals and letters, will each serve to unfold her history, in connection with the organization of the new church:—

"*Sunday, Oct.* 5, 1834. Never have I felt so slight a degree of interest in Christ's cause, since my first attachment to him, for so long a period, as at the present time. Four months have passed since I truly enjoyed God's Spirit. I have to-day witnessed an interesting and solemn scene. A member of my class has, to-day, covenanted to be the Lord's. At half past eight this morning, I stood at the water's edge, where I saw her buried with Christ in baptism. The scene was to me delightful; four and a half years to-day since I performed the same duty. Dear youth; Heaven guard her; Jesus succor her; Spirit of God direct her. She is thine, oh thou Triune God; take her in thy hand; lead her, carry her in thy bosom. Glory everlasting be rendered to thine eternal name, for this display of thy goodness, in making her a trophy of divine grace. Nor tongue nor pen can describe my feelings. I felt to look to God, to grant me grace; I plead with him, for a sense of my sins, and for forgiveness. As I looked into my heart, I felt that ignorance of God, and the Holy Scriptures, reigned there,—and I could but exclaim, 'Lord, make me mighty in the Scriptures.' I am exceedingly ignorant of them; I wish to know them fully,—particularly the doctrines of the Bible. I design commencing a study of the Scriptures,—comparing Scripture with Scripture,—therefore commence with 'original sin,' which I shall prove by Scripture. Lord, enlighten my deadened mind, that I may understand them, and make me to understand thy word fully, that I may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour. Oh, that I might

First thoughts of leaving Mr. Wilson's church.

rise from this *low* state, in which I have so long been, and raise my standard of holiness. I wish not to be a *common*, but an *uncommon Christian*."

"*Oct.* 26. For a week past, I have been endeavoring to learn my duty. The High-street Church is to be formed in November, and I sometimes feel as if I ought to leave our church, and unite with those who are to constitute that body of Christ. Should I consult personal gratification, I think I should go; but whether this would be my duty, God only knows. For several days the past week, I was *unwilling* even to *consider* the subject. My wish was to remain where I am, and consequently I would not indulge a thought that it could be my duty to go. Then, again, I felt as if I preferred remaining where I am. I am perplexed, yet not discouraged. In preference to conversing with my parents, I have, this evening, written them the following letter:—

"*Providence, Oct.* 26, 1834.
Sabbath evening.

MY DEAR PARENTS,—While I was in the broad road to ruin, sinning against gospel light, and despising the counsel of the only living and true God, and exerting every nerve within me to oppose truth, God, of his infinite mercy, made me to see something of my rebellious heart, and led me to Jesus' *feet*, where I trust I found forgiveness of sin, and felt to put my trust in his name. Soon I connected myself with Mr. Wilson's church, for whose spiritual welfare I have ever since felt a deep interest. There are many ties to bind my heart there. I love the brethren and sisters of that church. I love the dear Sabbath-school. I love the societies which exist among us. My parents are members of that church, which of course strengthens

the ties by which I have five and a half years been bound there. But for three years, I have, as it were, thrown away many, very many, precious Sabbaths. During that time, I have neither been edified, or profited by the preaching of our pastor. And while in this infant state I have sat under his preaching, it has had a tendency to lead me to worldly-mindedness, rather than spirituality; consequently I have not experienced that 'growth in grace,' which I might otherwise have done. When starving for the want of spiritual instruction, I have been constrained to seek it elsewhere, and that not without pain. You are probably aware, that in November, the High-street Church is to be formed. For a week past, my mind has been in a perplexed state, with regard to duty; sometimes I have felt as if I ought to leave our church, and be one of those few who will form that church. I have felt that there my own spirituality might be promoted; that by hearing the word of God preached in its faithfulness, I might grow in grace. If this be the case, then I should be better prepared to do good. *There* the field of labor is wide and extensive, and a Christian, who *will* act, *may* act, and thus 'glorify God,' which we learn is the chief end of man. There will be many trials and temptations undoubtedly; thorns and briers may spring up, and fill our path, yet our motto must be, 'onward,'—life, or death—pain, or pleasure, 'onward, onward.' I wish to stay, or go, as God shall direct. If he say, 'stay,' then I most willingly stay; if he say, 'go,' then I most willingly go. With me the case yet remains undecided; there is a struggle within my breast; but should God direct, or make plain to me, the path of duty, I desire to yield to his decision, as I shall feel that to be right. I feel that there is no other way for me to do at this time, but carry the case to God, who is a

'prayer-hearing, and answering God.' He will assuredly direct.'

I have written the above, that you may consider it, and, should I feel it my duty to go and assist in building up that church, you will heartily consent to my wishes.

Ever your affectionate daughter, REBECCA."

"Monday, 27th. New reasons, for remaining where I am, have presented themselves to my mind to-day, and I am distressed. Lord direct me. I have conversed with Mr. A., and Mr. C., and Mr. W., to-day. One brought forward reasons for staying,—one, reasons for going,—and the other, reasons on both sides; those for staying and going seemed to be equally great, and when placed in the scale, seemed to me to balance. I do not think either of the three wished, or intended, to influence, but by my particular request, advanced reasons for my consideration. Ladies' Moral Reform Association this afternoon, at the Committee-room, rear of Richmond-street Church. Peculiarly interesting meeting. Tract Distributer's concert this evening. Very solemn remarks made by Rev. Mr. Waterman, Mr. Lewis, and a few others. Came home fully determined to be more faithful in my district; felt condemned, and well I may be, for I have been unfaithful."

"Tuesday, 28th. This evening I have conversed with my dear parents, respecting it. My father was much affected. He produced reasons for staying, which I endeavored to answer. Our conversation was interesting and solemn,—of nearly an hour's length. I felt tried about introducing it; but felt that I ought to do it. I finally remarked, that I was as far as this decided, that I would like to go, and felt it a duty to do so, if they did not object. My father replied, that he had no other interest

than my happiness, and he would consider it. I remarked, that it was trying to leave them, but I felt that I could be receiving more good *there*, and of course could be more useful in the world. Enjoyed prayer after the conversation of the evening.

Friday, 31st. Feel fully decided that it is my *duty* to leave our church, and unite with those who form the High-street Church. It will be trying of course to leave our church; but I shall still love the brethren and sisters, as I now do. Preparatory meeting this evening. I felt very solemn while there, in view of the *probability* of its being the last season of this kind I shall ever enjoy, standing in the same relation to the church that I now do, as a member of that church. Have felt *calmer* to-day."

From letters written in September.

"DEAR M——,—As to how I have passed my time recently, I have but little to say. I have not been out much, indeed I do not expect, or even wish, to go as much as formerly. I am tired of such a life. I wish to be more domestic, and should have been so, long ago, had I been able to be so; but as I was not, I endeavored to make the best of it."

"DEAR BROTHER,—I wish I could see my Canadian acquaintances this evening. It is a very stormy evening, and I am up alone in the house. The wind being south-west, beats the trees against my windows, which makes it appear very gloomy. It is not nine o'clock yet, but as there was nothing to prevent, they all chose to retire early. I came up stairs for the same purpose, but concluded I could do as well with the sleep I should have, to retire at

Painful indecision as to duty in the case.

my accustomed hour, and by so doing, I could write you quite a letter. Ever since you left, I have been afflicted with a rheumatic complaint, affecting my knees, so as to render me quite clumsy; oftentimes it requires a great effort for me to rise from my chair, or to sit down. I have felt much better for a week past, and hope I am not thus going to be rendered a cripple. But even if I were, it is no more than I deserve. My appetite continues good, and you must know that, within a year, I have gained eight pounds of flesh, and I presume all of that has been gained since I left home for Canada. My weight is greater now than ever before, being 103 lbs."

To Miss M——.

"The Church on the hill is to be dedicated on the first of January, and Mr. Lewis, of New York, is called to preach there. He comes on trial, a fortnight hence. I hope we shall all like him; possibly occasionally I may play truant, and be seen there."

From letters dated in October.

"My dear Ann,—You ask how I am. What shall I answer. I feel happy to reply, I am now in the scale which *seems* to preponderate on the 'High-street' side. It seems to me the arguments on that side the question, are weightier than those on the 'staying' side. How I may feel tomorrow is unknown to me. To God alone can I go for direction. Pray for me, dear Ann. Oh, for a decided heart.

In haste, yours as ever, affectionately,

Rebecca.

Providence, Oct. 29, 1834."

To an intimate acquaintance.

"Charles has just come in, and says the meeting this evening has been remarkably interesting and soleman. I attended church at Mr. Waterman's this afternoon. He is now preaching a course of doctrinal sermons. To-day was an introductory sermon, on the importance of doctrinal knowledge. How important the subject. How solemn the remarks. God will bless such preaching.

Our Bethel Society have just sent a donation of $75 to the American Seamen's Friend Society. We meet two afternoons in the month. On Friday it meets here. Sometimes our meetings are pleasant—not always as profitable as they should be."

In November,—to different friends.

To M——.

"Our church is still in an unhappy state. But I believe it is generally supposed that many who were, a year since, warm advocates to such sentiments as are, and have been, advanced from our pulpit, are now decidedly orthodox, and even say, 'Mr. W. is *rather* too old to preach, and it would be well for him to retire.' And some say, there is not one in ten who is not orthodox of our church; so that we hope, on the whole, truth *is* gaining ground. The preaching is no better than ever. Such sermons as we have had to-day are such as God will disown at the last day; and how can the preacher stand at God's bar, and feel that he is pure from the blood of souls? 'Tis impossible. Wednesday evening is our annual meeting of the church. Mr. W. is using all his influence, to turn out —— from the church committee; says he is trying to break up

Expression of views of Rev. Mr. Wilson's influence.

the church. We hope he will not succeed. Mr. —— is just the man; would that there were eight more just like him. Mr. —— is exerting a very *good* influence in our church. Some of our members are awake, and I believe are trying to glorify God. Deacon Wardwell took leave of the singing-seats this afternoon. On Wednesday he was eighty years old; and he felt to-day as if it were time he left those seats, as he was so far advanced. They sung the 'Pilgrim's Farewell.'"

To M. B. A.

"I am about to dissolve that connection with our church by which I have five and a half years been bound. Do you ask me why? The High-street Church is to be formed very soon, and I feel it to be my duty to go there, and assist in building up that infant church. I feel that I may be more useful there, than where I now am. Our church is large, and can well spare a few members, who can be useful there. An infant enterprise, like this, needs support from Christians. Probably some of our church, and some of Mr. Waterman's, will leave. Mr. and Mrs. I. C. are decided, and a few others are considering it. I will not name others, at present, as you will so soon be here to hear all about it; and we can tell you, better than write. I do not say I am *decided*. But provided I can agree with the Articles of Faith, I expect to go. It is a subject over which much prayer has been made, and I hope my decision was not made until I had prayed much. If I go, it is from a firm conviction of duty."

To W. R.

"I presume you have snow in Canada. It has not yet troubled us. Yesterday a few inches fell,—just enough to say 'snow.' The new Church, the frame of which was just raised as we passed by there on our return from Pawtuxet last summer, is now about completed. It is called the 'High-street Church,' and is to be dedicated on New-Year's day. It is a very pretty church, and the situation being such, it is hoped many of those who are now 'stayers at home' on Sabbath day, will be induced to attend there. On Thursday, the 18th of December, the church is to be organized. It probably will commence with forty members,—twenty-three from Mr. Waterman's church, and fourteen from ours, and three others."

In December—to a friend.

"I hope we all go to the new church, from a sense of duty, and not our own interest merely. We feel that the opportunity of doing good is more extensive in that part of Providence, than in our own church. Rev. William B. Lewis, of New York, is to become the pastor."

To her brother.

"The year is now nearly gone. How many promises, made on last New-Year's day, remain unfulfilled. How many vows, then made, which never have been performed. Alas! sad will the account be, at the final day of judgment. What account will you render? Are you ready for that day? Conscience reply. Heaven and hell are before you, and you are called on to make choice of either one or the other. With your eye fixed on the judgment,

"Any thing but a party spirit in a church."

your hand on your heart, and God's word in your hand,—*decide—decide.* Awake thou that sleepest, and call on thy God. Prepare to meet him. And let the close of this year, 1834, bear witness of your covenant, to be on the Lord's side. Angels wait to bear back the tidings to heaven. One word closes this, remember your soul is immortal, and unless you repent, you cannot be saved. Seek then, dear brother, to meet your parents and sisters in heaven."

"*Providence, Dec.* 31, 1834.

MY EVER DEAR AUNT,— * * Two months ago, deacon Wardwell took leave of our singing-seats. He has sat with the singers fifty years, and left the gallery the Sabbath after he was eighty years old. It really appears singular, to see him sitting in his own pew, with his family. Mr. Wilson enjoys good health, and still retains his office as Pastor of the church. We all wish very much he would retire, that some younger one, who could perform the duties of a faithful Pastor, might fill his place. He does not, however, feel his infirmities; but fancies himself as well able as formerly to perform his duties. Some of the church are bitterly opposed to having any other minister, consequently, there are *two parties* in the church. Any thing but a party spirit to get into a church. But I need not go into a detail with regard to the church, as I have frequently written you, and when I saw you I told you the state of the church as nearly as possible. And now would it surprise you, for me to tell you, that Elizabeth and myself are no longer members there? Perhaps it will, but is even so. A new church has recently been formed, consisting of members of Mr. Wilson's, and Mr. Waterman's church, in High-street. The building occupies the

lot formerly occupied by the house of Mr. Thomas Rhodes, near Mr. Pabodie's. It was commenced in August, and will be dedicated on the eighth of January, (next week.) It is a very neat, pretty house, with about one hundred pews. The situation is very desirable. The Christian Hill people,—or, I should say, *many* of them, do not attend church, because the churches are far off, and they cannot take the trouble to go. It was therefore thought advisable to build a Congregational church on that lot, and in order to do so, many members of the two Congregational churches must leave, and assist in building up that. Accordingly, after much consideration, reflection, and prayer, for direction,—we (E. and myself) felt it our duty to go and do what we could in assisting to build up an infant church. We felt likewise that we might exert a greater, and perhaps a *better* influence there than where we were. Consequently, on the evening of the third of December, we sent in to the church a request for dismission. Fourteen members of Mr. Wilson's church have left to go there. We do not feel that in leaving, we are to be separated from the members of Mr. W.'s church; we feel much attached to the church, and it is painful for us to leave; but still where our duty calls, we hope we are willing to go. We shall find quite a difference in the walk, although it is not far, only about half a mile.

Our Sabbath-school will be organized on next Sabbath morning. E. and myself both contemplate taking classes. The class I have had in Mr. Wilson's school was very interesting, and it was painful to give that up; but I have secured so good a teacher for them, that now I feel quite easy. Mr. K. has taken charge of it, and he is a very faithful and efficient teacher, and the class are much interested in his instructions. Of the fourteen who have left

our church, nine are teachers in the Sabbath-school, which makes quite a vacancy in the school;—however, our church is sufficiently large to furnish teachers for as many classes as they can make, provided the church-members are interested in Sabbath-school instruction. Perhaps our leaving will induce some to enter who have heretofore kept back; in that case, you know there will be a two-fold influence exerted in the cause. Such an object is worthy of some *pains* being taken for its accomplishment. * *

Yours affectionate niece, REBECCA."

Such an interest was felt by Miss R. in the organization of this church, and in its subsequent arrangements, that she kept a minute account of all its meetings, and of all present at such, and of every act of business, and made the latter, when previously known, a constant subject of prayer. Among the items, constituting a little memorandum in her hand-writing of the principal dates in her history, is the following:—

"Dec. 3, 1834. Dismissed from the B. C. church, to the High-street Congregation church, Providence, R. I."

Her journal speaks of the services at the organization thus:—

"It did appear that God was there. Every exercise was solemn. Never, no never did I place myself in such a solemn situation. The world saw my profession. Those who were present knew my creed, and I am willing they should know it. I wish them to know it. God of grace, set thy seal to our covenant vows, and glorify thy great name. We are now *constituted* a church. May God own *us*, bless us, prosper us, and make us a church whose *efforts* he will bless."

Her difficulties as to infant baptism.—Number of letters of the year.

She found some difficulty in relation to the article of the new church which insisted upon infant baptism. She "borrowed 'Wardlaw,' but could not become interested in it, and consequently returned it half read."—She consulted a number of authors, and after all, summed up, in her own way, "the arguments which seemed conclusive."—She became increasingly active as a Christian, until sickness "forbade her aiding the new church much except by" her "prayers."

The following passages of her memoranda, show us how she viewed herself at this time :—

"Dec. 28. Again I am deprived the privilege of hearing the word of God preached. My health is still feeble ; but I can say I am willing to remain at home, even while I see others going up to the house of the Lord."

"Tuesday, Dec. 30. I have been to-day making up my accounts for the past year,—such as my expenses, subscriptions, contributions, etc. etc., in order to have every thing in perfect order to commence the new year. In looking over my letter-book, found I had written eighty letters the past year, and received fifty. How many of these have been profitable letters. I seldom write a profitable letter. I am so light and trifling, my mind often wanders to worldly subjects when penning a letter to a friend. I have been reading in Barr's Help to Christians. The chapter on 'False marks frequently mistaken as evidences of a gracious state,' is very solemn."

"Dec. 31. Among the various preparations I have long been making for the new year, I have almost *forgotten* my *heart*, to prepare that. The most essential part is the heart. Oh, could I penetrate into the deepest recesses of my heart; how black would its sins appear ; it is black, foul, and sinful. I wish I felt prepared to

close this and commence the new year; but it seems as if I could not make any impression of weight on my heart. May the Lord awaken me, and cause me to resist Satan, and act for Jesus.

I often wish I knew just how I did influence others. I do not know. I never shall know till the judgment. I am far from God. Oh, I do wish to be prepared for the new year; to spend tomorrow in a preparation for it; and so live, act, and do, as to evince to the world my attachment to the Lord Jesus. When shall I feel as I ought to feel. Oh, that I could have a *broken heart*,—that is, such a heart as I want to have, and a contrite spirit. Why do I live as I do; worldliness of heart, and of motive, is a characteristic of me."

"*Providence, Feb.* 10, 1835.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,—Probably you are not aware that I have been idle. I am but just recovering, and not having fully regained my strength, cannot guide my pen very straightly. Ever since the first of November, I have felt very unwell, but not inclined to complain; consequently, exerted myself as much as usual; attended as much as I was able to my duties in my Saviour's cause, until my strength utterly failed; and for a few weeks confined myself at home. But finding myself no better, after remaining at home four weeks, concluded to go out occasionally, which I did, for some time. Finally, it became so great an effort to move about house, that I began to feel anxious about my health, and sent for a physician, who forbad my sitting up at all. After which, I was so much reduced, as when I attempted to sit up, it produced a faintness, and spasms, so that, for several days, was unable even to sit long enough to have my bed made. By much care, and

diligent attention to doctor's prescriptions, I soon began to mend, until I have become quite smart, so as to be able to be out. Have passed the day out to-day, (my first appearance in the street for five weeks.) Think you not I was glad to walk 'Westminster' again. I feel much better to-day than I have done for three months.

I feel very anxious to spend my days in the service of God. I have been an unprofitable servant, and unworthy to be called a disciple of Jesus. But I hope to be, for the future, more watchful, prayerful, and faithful. When, dear William, shall I hear you say, 'I am not *almost*, but *altogether* persuaded to be a Christian?' Time is short; eternity hastening; and soon will it be too late, to ask you the question. To-day you *have;* tomorrow you may be in another world. Be wise. God calls. Christ intercedes."

In a letter of May 25th, to her "dear uncle and aunt," at Kingston, U. C., she wrote:—

"We have not yet regretted the change, (in joining High-street church.) I trust it has been profitable to myself. Our pastor preaches to our consciences, and so close are his remarks, that we cannot but feel that he is preaching to *us*. We are well aware, that, in changing our situation, we have increased our responsibility amazingly. There is a flourishing Sabbath-school of 260 in our new church, and with some of the scholars apparently deep feeling. We hope God is near us. Some conversions among us."

At about the same time, she wrote to a former Sabbath-school pupil:—

"MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—While seated in church Sabbath afternoon, and listening attentively to the deeply

interesting remarks of Rev. Mr. Bullard, (Sabbath-school Agent,) on the duties of Sabbath-school teachers, the members of my former class were presented before my mind. I thought of that interesting group of immortal souls, who were two and a half years placed under my care; I thought of the *name*, and *character*, of *each* one; and then I looked at myself, and thought of my unfaithfulness to them, and my soul was melted within me, in view of my neglect. Mr. Bullard alluded to classes containing fourteen, eighteen, and twenty scholars, where, in consequence of the faithful efforts and prayers of the teachers, they were, *without a single exception*, hopefully converted. It may be, (thought I,) that in consequence of *my* unfaithfulness, *some*, or *all*, of those eleven precious souls may be lost. The thought overwhelmed me, and for a moment I gave vent to my feelings in tears. Judge of my feelings, on returning from church,—almost the first word that saluted my ears, was that you, my dear Mary, were rejoicing in God. What! thought I, she who has been the subject of so many prayers,—she with whom the Spirit of God has so repeatedly striven? Is it so? Is she of the happy number who is on the Lord's side? I hastened to my '*Bethel*,' where I unbosomed my soul to my Saviour. I felt that there were many reasons why I should feel interested in you; I loved you as being a lamb of that flock of which I was so recently overseer; and I *cannot but rejoice* when any of those dear lambs are gathered into Christ's kingdom.

Resolve, in the outset, to be a *whole Christian*, an *active Christian*, a *faithful Christian*, and a *self-denying Christian*. Recollect what religion is,—'it is to hate sin, and love holiness.' Do not encourage, on *slight grounds*, the hope that you are a Christian. Remember, dear Mary,

you are now laying your foundation for eternity. Solemn thought! Soon every man's work must be tried, of what sort it is. Examine *well* then your evidences. Dread nothing so much as putting your hand to the plough, and looking back; as beginning to run well, and being hindered by a *tempting world*, or a *subtle enemy*, or a *treacherous heart.* Determine, in the strength of the Lord, that you will persevere unto the end, that you may be saved. The time is short. Heaven is worth *laboring* for. In due time you shall reap, if you faint not. Remember, dear friend, *you* have a part to perform in this great work. Strive to understand what that part is. In reading the blessed word of God, carefully distinguish between what *he* has *engaged to do*, and what he *requires you* to do. Do *your* part *faithfully*, and *he* certainly will perform *his*. *Study* attentively God's word; make it the 'man of your counsel, and the guide of your youth.' Be very often at the 'throne of grace;' let your 'growth in grace' be *rapid.* Strive to be *uncommonly holy.* Let your standard of action be high. Bear in mind this fact, that if you enlist in the Saviour's cause, you must expect to labor for a *world.* Do what *you* can to hasten on the day of millennial glory. Be faithful to your *companions*, your *class-mates*, your *friends.* Pray for them, and forget not your teacher, who has labored and prayed so much for your conversion. When you are at the mercy-seat, plead for her who was once your Sabbath-school teacher.

Affectionately, your friend, R. G. R."

She writes,—"May 31, 1835. Last Sabbath I made a few remarks to one of my class. She was affected deeply. After telling me she thought it was her duty to give God her heart, and to do it *now*, I asked her if she intended to

do it?—and if so, *when?* She, unhesitatingly, replied, I do intend to do it, and to do it *now*. I addressed a few words to her, and told her how solemn such a *resolution* was, and that she had vowed to God to give him her heart now, and I hoped she would not neglect to pay it. This morning I reminded her of her promise, and asked her if she had done it. She said she had, and that she done it last Sabbath. I was as faithful in my remarks to her as I could be; begged her not to be deceived, but examine her evidences. I was unable to say much; knew not how to address her,—whether to *encourage* or *discourage*. God knows her heart. I hope to see her this week, and know what are the grounds of her hope."

Soon after the above incident, she wrote:—"Had an overflowing spirit of prayer at twilight devotion. My heart was melted, in view of my responsibility as a Sabbath-school teacher, tract distributer, and professing Christian. I was also deeply affected, in view of my state of health, which has for six months been exceedingly delicate. I have complained to others but little, (for I do not wish to trouble others with my feelings,) but have felt very unwell. It is with the utmost exertion that I am able to attend church all day, or indeed half a day, and the walk is so far. I thought, this evening, that God had some wise end in afflicting me, and prayed he would sanctify it to my spiritual welfare, and make it a means of my *growth in grace* and *sanctification*. I thought, too, it might be that it was preparatory to my removal from this world, and prayed God that it might lead me to search my heart, and increase my holiness,—and whether I live or die, I may glorify him."

Another journal entry, which mentions similar efforts to interest a gay youth in religion, without apparent success,

is interlined, "Hopefully converted in March, 1836," one year afterwards.

She added,—"Tuesday, June 16. Enjoyed a nearness of access to the mercy-seat this morning. This afternoon was invited out to tea, with Christians; and, of course, (as I always do,) I lost the spirit of prayer; was rather too lively; felt so unpleasantly about it, that I almost resolved to visit no more, it was so unprofitable to my soul. This evening Miss —— related her experience to the church. Oh, how sweet to have additions, *from the world*, to our little band.

Wednesday, 17th. Visited again. Mrs. R. C. had a few Christians visit her. I said to her in the morning, I should decline, if she were going to have much company, and gave her my reasons for so doing. *I went*. In the evening, Mrs. B. and myself sat together, and had a profitable conversation. One after another came to speak to us, and we immediately began to converse with them upon practical piety."

The following extract is from a letter of the 15th:—"Will not Mrs. P. write me soon, and suggest to me some new duties. I have but little of interest to communicate with regard to myself; I have been living so far from Jesus that my heart has been cold, and filled with sin. For a day or two past, I have felt more the need of being a *decided* follower of Jesus, and enjoyed a greater spirit of prayer. It is high time for me to awake. I feel it, and am resolved to do so. How vastly important that I devote my all to Jesus, and seek to promote his kingdom on the earth. My days will soon be past, and what I intend to do, I must do quickly. How much need is there of prayer, importunate, persevering prayer. Our little church feels that it is feeble. Do remember it, my dear friend, at the

throne of grace. We ought to be humble, in view of God's goodness to us; surely he has abundantly blessed us; his Spirit is now in our midst; but sinners are resisting it, and if Christians do not pray, and labor, I fear he will depart from us, and not return again."

On "Thursday, 18th." She "was deeply interested in reading the Memoirs of Harlan Page. He was a holy man, one after God's own heart. He improved every opportunity for doing good, and is now reaping his reward." She "longed to be like him."

How little she thought of the estimate then placed upon her by others. A letter to the compiler, dated Oct. 12, 1847, from an intimate friend and companion of Page, who was well acquainted also with Miss Russell, contains the following:—

"No feature was more prominent, in the character of Miss Russell, than a desire to do good. And her manner of doing it, may be mainly described, by a comparison with one who entered upon the reward of his labors before her, viz. Harlan Page. With a heart deeply and strongly moved with love to Christ, and to souls,—and with a lively sympathy, in whatever pertained to the extension of his cause,—she was ever on the alert, to select some field most favorable for scattering divine truth. If one method was not successful, she would resort to another, and never seemed satisfied, unless her whole influence was most advantageously employed on some errand of mercy, to alleviate the woes of others, spiritual, or temporal, or in extending, in the most effective manner, the Redeemer's kingdom. A very important trait in her character, was her happy talent, for giving concentration, and direction, to the influence of others. In enlisting and drawing out

this talent, that it might be employed for God, she was equally happy."

Two others must close the extracts which portray her character, as developed by her interest and efforts in the establishment of the new congregation in High-street,—although the materials which have been supplied by those who knew most of her influence at that time, would swell this selection to a large volume. One more is quoted to show that her interest in her former connection was not lost, in her zeal to aid the new church.

"*Providence, July* 1, 1835.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—Have you ever heard Rev. Cyrus Mason preach? He is pastor of 'the Cedar-street Church,' in New York. Shall I tell you some delightful news. On Monday evening, Mr. Wilson's *church* and *society* each held a special meeting, both of which were fully attended,—and voted, *unanimously*, (every member, even the ladies voting,) to give Mr. Mason a call, to become assistant pastor of that church. Mr. Wilson was much gratified with the proposition. Mr. Mason was in Providence, a fortnight since, and preached three times for Mr. Wilson, and he interested every individual in the house. It does seem as if the Lord had sent him here, and as if he would bless such a connection. For one I feel very much delighted, and I doubt not, every individual must feel so. That church surely needs a faithful pastor, if any church on the earth needs one. We feel ourselves as exceedingly blest, in having so faithful a pastor as Mr. Lewis, and are very happy in our present situation. I learn Mr. Jackson has accepted the call of Grace Church, to become their pastor. This is very gratifying intelligence. May God make *them both*, should they come to P. to labor, the instruments of great good to this wicked city.

A "little church" needs efficient members.

"*Providence, July* 9, 1835.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I was very happy to receive your letter of the 30th June, and am equally happy to be permitted to write you in return. My engagements have been such, that I have been unable until the present time, even to *commence* a letter. You are well aware, that I am exceedingly fond of letter-writing, and my views with regard to its being a *means* of 'growth in grace,' perfectly coincide with your own. I was much gratified when you proposed to me a correspondence, and I sincerely hope it may prove a profitable one to us both. The relation in which we stand is truly an interesting one. We are a brother and sister in the same church, bound together by solemn covenant vows, having one Father, one Saviour, and one Sanctifier. We profess to feel a deep interest in our dear church; surely we ought to feel so. It is a 'little church,' consequently there is the more need of each one of us being entirely consecrated to the work of the Lord. Much labor is to be performed, and but fifty persons to perform it. How exceedingly useful *might* we, and *ought* we to be. We should fix one eye on those hundreds of immortal souls in the vicinity of our church, and then on the glory of God, and, I am assured, we should feel there is a great work to do. What an *extensive field* for usefulness. What a privilege is now granted us! Can we be willing to neglect such a privilege? I doubt not it is a great trial to you, to be separated from us. It must be so. But, my dear brother, though separated from us, I trust you are surrounded with Christian friends, and are not without the means of grace. But above all, and more than all, you have the same Father, to whom you can ever go, and feeling a perfect confidence in him, can cast all your cares upon him, and rest your soul in him. Is it not

an inestimable blessing? What can be compared to it? 'Tis precious indeed to have such a friend, and to be permitted to call him *Father*. How endearing the title.

Most heartily, my dear brother, will I answer your questions in reference to my religious feelings. I *did* feel, when I decided to become a member of the High-street church, resolved to be *more entirely consecrated* to the service of God than ever. I do *sincerely* believe that the *predominant* motive that impelled me to exert my *feeble influence* in that 'infant enterprise,' was that I might be, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, *more extensively* useful; and thereby *better* glorify my Father in heaven. I *did* feel, that I should be *more* willing to take up my cross daily, than I had ever before done. You ask, if it *has* been so? How shall I answer. Would to God, I could reply affirmatively; but I fear a *negative* answer approaches *nearer* the truth. I think I realize my privileges have been numerous. I have heard faithful preaching; but how little have I improved it. I *did* think, when I should have a *faithful pastor*, that I could not live so regardless of God's glory, but, as I should be constantly having motives for holy living placed before me, I could not resist them. But oh, my heart; here is the difficulty, a *cold heart*. Oh, it is cold; 'tis hard; 'tis, I fear, relentless. You speak of my health. I do feel, that when the body is affected, the mind is also. I do not often complain. 'Tis useless to trouble others with my feelings; but for *eight months* I have not known a well day. This doubtless affects my mind,—perhaps seriously too. I admit that it should lead me nearer to God, and cause me to 'grow in grace' rapidly, rather than impede my spiritual progress. Sometimes I think I have felt a peculiar nearness to God, and could praise him in my affliction. During

the three months, in which I was confined at home, I enjoyed very much of the presence of God, and could say, 'it is good for me that I am afflicted.' For twelve Sabbaths, *home* was my *church*, and *conscience* and the *word of God my preachers*. These were precious Sabbaths. I am at present very feeble. It is more than I should do, to walk to church twice on the Sabbath, but it seems to me, when the hour for us to 'go up to the house of the Lord' arrives, that I too must go. After so long a walk, I feel but little prepared to do any good. But God means something by all this—I feel it. 'All things *shall* work together for our good.' My heart, at present, possesses some little feeling. I feel *some* desire to act for Christ; to live *entirely* for my Redeemer, who has done so much for me. Perhaps my ill health is designed to prepare me for another world. But let that be as it may, I hope to profit by it, and to be prepared for God's will, whether to live or die."

CHAPTER X.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER EXHIBITED IN LETTERS WRITTEN IN 1835—36.

OUR "letters," says one, "are our autobiography." The following extract from Miss Russell's journal may well introduce this chapter:—

"I recently observed a paragraph in a newspaper, which I am induced to note down, in order to preserve it. It is

Letters a picture "of common sense of life."

in regard to a 'proper style of letter-writing.' 'Hannah More never attempted what are called *good* letters herself, or much valued them in others. She used to say, "If I want wisdom, sentiment, or information, I can find them much better in books. What I want in a letter, is the picture of my friend's mind, and the common-sense of his life. I want to know what he is saying and doing; I want him to turn out the inside of his heart to me, without disguise, without appearing better than he is; without writing for a character. I have the same feeling in writing to him."' This opinion of Miss More coincides with my own."

The following exhibition of her turn for mirth, assures us that piety, during this period, did not extinguish her attachment to innocent recreation. She was still an attractive companion, with all her acquaintance, her pleasantry often cheering their spirits, and enlivening their duties. One evening, when about to retire, the mother of an intimate friend of Miss Russell, was astonished to receive, at her door, by the hand of a passing stranger, this note.

"My dear Mrs. ——,—'Opportunity to do good creates obligation to do it.' Having an opportunity, therefore I feel some obligation resting upon me to communicate to you intelligence respecting your daughter. Could you have watched the sly glances of a prim little Kentuckian, at the tea-table of a friend, Mrs. ——, this evening, methinks you would say, 'What meaneth this?' Brevity is usually desirable. I will give you particulars of this business when I see you. In haste, yours sincerely, Rebecca."

But the "good" *effected* was really important, simple as were the means. *The utter absurdity* of the idea thus

sportively suggested, at that late hour, and by *her too*, had no small influence upon the risibles of the family addressed. As was designed, both in selecting *theme*, *messenger*, and *time of reception*, a hearty laugh prepared a suffering invalid for a refreshing night's rest, while a recurrence to the subject has not failed to excite a cheerful smile ever since, even after the author has slept in the grave. She did not feel it wrong to promote the cheerfulness of others; under some circumstances, she deemed it a means of seeking their highest good.

Close of a letter to her brother, dated July 27, 1835.

"And now, in closing, let me ask, how stands the case between God and your soul? I see before me the tract '*The lost Soul.*' I will send it to you. It is a sister's gift. Will you accept of it? Will you read it? Do, dear brother, read it attentively. It is a solemn truth, that many souls *will* be lost. Are you willing to lose yours? Be *wise*, *delay not.*

In haste, your sister, affectionately, REBECCA."

"*Providence, Sept.* 7, 1835.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,—I fear you will think me very negligent, in delaying so long to answer your kind letter, but you will forgive me when I tell you that circumstances which were unavoidable, have prevented. Were it necessary, I could offer apologies enough to ensure forgiveness, but I am unwilling to occupy the room which I think may better be filled with other things. Please accept my thanks for your last, which came at the time I most needed it. I assure you I was very grateful for it, and *commenced* a reply soon after its reception, but have been wholly unable to finish it.

Her heart "a bad soil."

Would, my dear brother, that I could tell you that I was advancing in Christian knowledge and holiness, but my letter can contain no such encouraging facts. My heart remains harder than the flinty rock; it seems as if nothing would penetrate it. Its soil seems so bad, that all labor is thrown away upon it; for, instead of growing better, it grows worse. I *read* in vain, *pray* in vain, and *hear* in vain;—

> 'Of feeling, *all* things show *some* sign,
> But this *unfeeling heart* of *mine*.'

I sometimes think, that never was there a heart like mine. I am astonished at God's mercy and forbearance with me. The thought, what is it that separates between God and my soul, was just agitating my mind this morning, when I took up God's word, to read from its sacred pages. The first verse I read, answered the inquiry. 'Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.' This was to me a satisfactory reason. It was plain to me, that my sins had caused the separation, and I felt resolved to allow them no longer the opportunity of separating me from my God. I have not for months been in so cold and stupid a frame, as for the past month or two."

"*N*——, *Me.*, *Sept.* 10, 1835.
Thursday morning.

My dear Elizabeth,—I am sure you will be glad to hear of our safe arrival; and although not very much in the mood of writing, I will ease your troubled minds, (if they be troubled,) by saying a few words. I must tell you all about our wonderful journey *down east*. Would

that I possessed Major Jack Downing's pen, or rather his *brain*, and I could then amuse you with our adventures; but I can only write with the pen and brain of your sister R.; therefore you may know what to look for. * * *

While passing through B., I went into a public house, while they fed the horses. While sitting there, a fine looking young man came in, and bowed to me, and said he believed he knew me, and asked if it were not Miss Russell. I told him that was my name. He asked if I did not recognize him. I told him I did not recollect ever having seen him before. He said his name was M. M., and he believed had seen me at D. I told him I had never been there, and that it must have been a cousin of mine. Come to find out, it was Jane, for whom he mistook me. He apologised for his mistake, and said the resemblance was so striking, he supposed it really was her. He was well acquainted with uncle's family.

On reaching uncle's house, I took my basket in one hand, and hold of one trunk with the other, and Mr. Y. took one side of the trunk in one hand,—the other trunk in his other hand,—and we walked up from the gate, in style. Aunt thought it was a pedlar, coming to put up for the night, (as they sometimes do,) as she could not distinguish who it was so far off, as it was dark."

Extracts from a letter to her mother, dated Sept. 16th.

"In the afternoon, we had the horse saddled, in order to ride horseback, and I was to be the first rider. We had a fine horse and saddle, and away I went. Commenced riding in the orchard, but soon found the trees rather troublesome, and ventured into the road. Rode four miles, and became quite lame, as you may suppose, it being my first attempt at horsemanship. * * *

Two candles for a whole meeting-house.

An association of ministers meets here to-day and to-morrow, and every house is filled with strangers. I took my horseback ride, after tea, and then went to meeting. We went at quarter before seven o'clock, and the house was not opened. So we sat down upon the steps awhile, and then walked up and down the road for half an hour. It was a delightful evening. By and by we spied a man coming towards us, with a light in his hand. He opened the house, and we went in, and blundered into a pew. Mr. ——'s son, and one of the deacons, undertook to light the house. They consulted awhile, and then commenced. How they were going to light it, was a mystery to me. Not a lamp in the house, and I saw no place to *put* one, if they had it. They had but *two candles*, for the whole, and how do you think they got along. I'll tell you; they cut *one* candle in *two*, and put the pieces in candle-sticks for the pulpit. Then cut another candle into *four* pieces, and took *two* pieces to light the gallery, or rather orchestra, and the *other two* were to light the whole lower part of the house; but where were the candle-sticks?—why, they had *wooden* ones, that looked like *boot-jacks*, with a hole cut for the candle. These were fastened on the top of the pews. * * * We could scarcely distinguish the minister, and could not *see* any one else at all. When they first lighted the house, we saw there were not fifty there, and not twenty besides the minister and delegates. They sat awhile, and then one gentleman asked another to preach. But he said he could not, for he was going to preach next morning. Then he went to another, and begged him awhile, and finally dragged him into the pulpit. But he had better have kept out of the pulpit, and gone to *school*, for he was a young green-looking genius, with no learning, talent, nor any thing else. He made a speech

of some length to begin with, apologizing for having no sermon; but he went on, and *made* one, such as it was. He gave out a hymn. They waited awhile; then *one* minister arose and asked another to set the tune. But he had no book, nor light; so I handed him over mine. It was so dark I could not find the place; but he soon found it, for he took the light. Two or three joined him, but *bass music* is not very fascinating; there was no female voice; I almost began to help them, but I did not know the words, so could not. They finished, however, the hymn. When we reached home, uncle sat down by us, to know about the meeting; his first question was whether there were many there,—but we told him we could not *see*. * * *

When I attended meeting on the Sabbath, the entry was partly filled, and people were standing around the doors, and only two in the house, and those were deacons. That is the fashion here. They wait till the minister begins to read the hymn, and then all go in together.

And now for the meeting-house. It is built on a rock; contains about fifty pews; and the gallery is almost as large as the house. We sat in the fifth pew from the pulpit, and were *under* the gallery besides. There were not more than fifty people in the house.—And now for the pulpit *curtain*. Uncle had given me a description of *that* before I went. He said there were *two* breadths of red bombasette in it,—and when the subscription paper was circulated, one would give six and a quarter cents, and another ninepence, and no one over twenty-five cents; and he believed it did not cost but nine shillings in all. When I went in, I would not look at the curtain for some time. Finally I looked up, and was obliged to turn my head, for I never was more amused in my life. By the way, the

"Minister, a farmer, town-treasurer, sexton, and pastor."

minister is a *farmer*, *town-treasurer*, and I believe, *sexton* and *pastor*."

The design of the journey, to revive her spirits, was gained. It improved her health.

The following extracts throw light upon her efforts, on her return from this journey:—

"A few ladies met together, and organized a society, calling themselves the High-street Female Charitable Society. 'The design of the society is to furnish articles of clothing for the destitute, having particular reference to poor children, to enable them to attend the Sabbath-school.' The society has now been in operation nine months, and has increased from nine to thirty members. During this time, there have been fourteen meetings; the average attendance has been nine and ten. We have received, as donations, one hundred and eighty-four garments, twenty and a half yards cloth, and thirty-six yards braided straw." * * *

Although she had but few means of grace in her absence, and notwithstanding the hilarity of the above letter, there is evidence of continued enjoyment in religion at times. But she "laments that the jaunt was not, on the whole, of much benefit, of *none* to" her "*soul*."

The marriage of her elder sister, was a painful event to Rebecca, as the letter which follows evinces.

"*Providence*, *Oct.* 27, 1835.

EVER DEAR SISTER,—I have been thinking to-day, that had you left home to pass a week in Boston, New York, or any other place, I certainly should have written you a letter; and I know not why a letter will not be equally as

acceptable, as it would be were you absent from Providence. Presuming it will be, I have concluded to spend a part of this afternoon in writing to you. You have now been from us nearly a week, (it certainly seems like *four*,) and is it really so? Have you left us, no more to be a member of our *family circle?* No more to take your seat at the table, as one of *us?* No more to accompany me to the house of God? Can it be? Never, until the separation *had* taken place, did I realize how much I loved you; never, until then, did I know the value of my dear Elizabeth. Would that I could have appreciated your society while I was blest with it. But you know we never do value our blessings, until we are deprived of them. How much cause have I, my dear sister, to be grateful to you, for your many kindnesses to me. You have indeed been a kind, an affectionate, and faithful sister, and I trust I never shall forget your kindness, or your affection. Accept my warmest thanks, and believe me, when I tell you, that I heartily repent, that I have ever grieved or wounded your feelings. Forgive me, my sister, forgive me, and I will try for the future, to merit your love, if possible. But do I doubt your affection? Not in the least. I know you love me. How many things are there to bind our hearts together. We have, from our earliest youth, associated together; we have slept together; were convicted and hopefully converted about the same time; and on the same day were united to the church, where we were five and a half years members. After which we *together* joined the *dear church* of which we are now members. All these circumstances combined, render us peculiarly happy in each other's society. But we are not separated; we are in the same city, and can often see each other. Most heartily do I welcome your *beloved husband*, as a *brother*. I love

him, as a *brother;* I love him, as *being your husband;* I love him, as a brother in Christ Jesus. I will not then feel that our number is *diminished*, but that it is *increased.* We are now *seven*, whereas a week since we were but *six.*

You cannot conceive how unpleasantly I felt when you left us. I could not avoid shedding tears. I went immediately to *my room*, and gave vent to my feelings. *This*, thought I, is *my room*,—one week ago, it was *Elizabeth's* and *mine*,—now, 'tis mine. I opened my draw, (once yours,) and I could not speak. I cried myself to sleep. I felt worse than I have before done. Every thing rushed to my mind. To-day I feel better reconciled; but oh, how *I miss you!* Tongue cannot tell how much I love you.

Now, dear E., I must say to you, that you have just commenced a new life. You have become a *wife.* Be faithful to your husband. Be faithful as a Christian. Let your standard of piety be very high. * * * My dear sister, you have covenanted to be the *Lord's.* Do honor God. Do live for *him.* Give him your *first* affections. Your husband asks only your *secondary* affections. May the blessing of God attend *you* and *yours.* Let your walk be close with God, and let your closet bear witness that you are an *exemplary*, a *consistent* Christian. * * *

Will you write to me, and tell me my duty. I am any thing but a consistent Christian. My heart is as hard as a mill-stone. Pray for me, dear E. Write when you can, if it is but a *note.*

With a great deal of love, I am as ever, your truly affectionate, but very unworthy sister, REBECCA."

"*Providence, Dec.* 2, 1835.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—A very 'happy new year,' to my dear William. You will perceive I have dated this a day

Sympathy with her brother, sick at a "boarding-house."

in anticipation, on account of its being your 'birth-day,' and I thought it might be a gratification to you to know you were remembered on this day. * * *

I am very sorry to learn you have been ill, and hope you have, ere this, quite recovered. We all sympathized with you. Doubtless, you had as good care taken of you, as you would be able to have at *any* 'boarding-house,' but that is not *home* you know. And one wishes a home when sick. I have been so much unwell the last year, that I know by experience how to feel for you. I am quite unable to tell you of my pains and aches, but they have been very severe. I have suffered much more than I have ever told any one of, for I consider it unnecessary to trouble others with my feelings, as that cannot relieve me. After I returned from Maine, I was, for three or four days, better, as I thought; but after that time, I became more unwell, and have suffered exceedingly, until the last fortnight, when I think I have been gaining a *little* every day, until to-day, when I feel indeed better than for *two* months past. I think, with very great care, I may continue to *gain*, until I *may possibly* be once more *well*. At least eleven months have passed away since I have known a well day. This time has not past unpleasantly, or unhappily, however. At one time my prospect for recovering was very doubtful. I had reason to think that my account was soon to be sealed for eternity. Medical aid seemed to fail to give relief. Dr. Miller admitted to me, that it was a peculiar case, and was apparently very stubborn, yet he *hoped* to effect a cure. He now speaks very encouragingly, and indeed I think the prospects are much more favorable. I have been able the last week to exercise some. Being without help, we were all obliged to exert ourselves. I know not that it has had a bad effect upon me, and hope

it will not. I have not been able to *walk* out yet. I *ride occasionally*. But I think I feel no *anxiety* about recovering. At one time, I *almost hoped* that I *should fade away*, until I should be numbered among the dead; but God seems to have ordered it otherwise. I do not *know* that I shall recover, but I *think* the prospect is rather favorable. Whether I do or not, it matters not to me, for I trust I have chosen that part which cannot be taken from me. My peace I trust is made with God. I *know* I am his. I speak confidently. I have often thought, of late, what a precious treasure I had laid up in heaven. Oh, it is unspeakably precious. I have, for six and a half years, been trying to add to this treasure, until it has become eminently valuable to me. I would not part with it for *worlds*. I have had one friend, who has been with me very much of late, and has, by his presence, softened many pains, and soothed many sorrows. He has proved himself a friend. To *him* I have unbosomed my inmost soul. He has been so kind to *me*, that I would like to have him become *your* friend, and he very much wishes it. He has long solicited a place in your affections, and though you have repeatedly *refused* to become acquainted with him, he is very willing even now to become your friend. This, dear brother, is Jesus, the Saviour. Would you not like to have him for your friend? He will be equally kind to you. You to-day commence a new year. Twenty-six of your short years are past. Perhaps *more than half* of your days are finished. Do I say more *than half*,—yes, perhaps, another second of December, the sun will shine upon your grave. We can have no lease of our life. My brother, are you prepared for another world? I know not your heart. God does however. If you *are*, happy is it for you; but if you are not, the wrath of God awaits you.

"An eldest child holds a responsible station."

I think I am not writing to one who is at all ignorant of the way of salvation; were I, I should feel differently in writing. I should then know how to address you. But you are already well acquainted with it. I have often written you on this subject. The subject still continues one of deep interest to me. Does it to you? Was it ever an interesting theme to you? I observe you never allude to it, when writing to me. But, again, you are commencing a new year. I do earnestly wish you were resolved to commence it with God. Will you not, to-day, renounce your sins, and give your heart to Jesus. He is surely worthy your affections. Oh, be persuaded to give yourself to Jesus; be his, now, and forever. I long for your salvation. You are the eldest child, and we all look to you for an example. It is an important station, and you will be accountable to God for it at the judgment. Let, therefore, your example be very holy, and we will follow. *Lead us*, dear William, and *we* will *follow you*, if your path be a holy one. The majority of our number are professedly pious. * * *

Let me urge on you, the importance of decision of character. Time waits for no one. Soon you will be in another world. Do then repent of your sins, and become a decided Christian. Think of that God whom you have slighted,—yea, whom you have spurned from your presence, and disregarded. Defer not. Oh, my dear brother, my heart feels for you. Would that I could persuade you to become reconciled to God.

My head aches badly, and it fatigues me much to write, you will therefore excuse the shortness of this, and the imperfect writing. * * *

With much love, I am as ever, your affectionate sister,

REBECCA."

"Rheumatism sticks closer than a brother."

"*Providence, Feb.* 5, 1836.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER,— * * * Last week I attended the female prayer-meeting connected with Mr. Mason's church, at Mr. A.'s. Mrs. A. gave me an invitation to attend, and I was happy to comply with it. It was an interesting meeting,—about twenty-five present. By request, I took part in the meeting. I was unusually embarrassed, for it was *seven months* since I had been at a female prayer-meeting, and there were only a few present; therefore I was a little tried, but I dared not refuse to pray. * * *

A friend very kindly called with a sleigh, and took me up to our lecture. It was a fine evening, and I was so anxious to go, for I had not been to one for more than six months, that I ventured. I was very warmly clad, and took no cold. We had a very solemn and faithful sermon, from our dear pastor. I hardly ever knew him to preach more solemnly. I really enjoyed the meeting very much. I am anticipating the privilege of being at our communion season next Sabbath. I hardly know whether to hope to go, but I will hope. The pain in my back continues, though it is not so steady or severe. My old friend, rheumatism, has proved a constant friend,—he sticks closer than a brother.. I am somewhat relieved of it of late, though I still suffer. * * *

This evening our dear church are assembled at the communicants prayer-meeting. This, dear Mary, is one of our most precious meetings. I have been wishing all day, I could meet with them; but such is not my privilege. I cannot walk so far without being seriously affected by it. I have walked no farther than Mr. Mason's church, since last September, (five months.) I said to mamma this afternoon, that I anticipated the privilege of being at our church

tomorrow afternoon, but she immediately objected to my attempting to walk there. She thought it very imprudent, to attempt to walk so far upon the snow, after being so long confined at home. I have consequently abandoned all hope of going *there*, but hope, if the weather is favorable, to go as far as Mr. Waterman's, or Mr. Mason's. I *long* to go,—yes, I LONG to go. On Wednesday I called upon Dr. Williams, to have my teeth fixed. I went through quite an operation. I had *three* filed apart, *three filled*, *nine stumps extracted*, and every tooth in my head cleaned. This was all done in *two hours*. I bore it very well. *I did not scream.* He says I deserve a great deal of praise, for I behaved *very well.*"

To Mrs. P., of A——.

"*Providence, May* 11, 1836.
Wednesday evening.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,— * * * I am now able to use quite *violent exercise*, of every kind except that of walking, which I find affects my poor lame back. For a long time I was confined to the house. Seven months passed away before I was able to walk to our church, and I only rode up two afternoons during that seven months. I am able now to go, nearly every Sabbath, to *our own dear church*, and I think I do appreciate the privilege, for it is indeed *very*, *very* great. And I think I shall appreciate the privileges I enjoy more than I heretofore have done. * * *

Are you still 'sheep without a shepherd?' How lamentable it is. Oh, that God would raise up men, who would give their lives to the ministry. How many destitute churches. I do hope you will soon be blest with a

faithful pastor, for it is one of God's choicest blessings. Are you engaged in the Sabbath-school? We have recently heard, my dear Mrs. P., of your affliction. The Lord has indeed come near unto you, and removed a *lamb* from the flock. He has taken one of your number, and removed him out of your sight. Doubtless this 'chastisement' appears 'not joyous, but grievous,' at this time, but it will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. We all feel to sympathize with you, though none but a mother can enter into a mother's feelings. It is touching one of her heart-strings, which vibrates when a child is removed; but God knows what is best, and I can only say to you, my dear friend, and Christian sister, trust in God, and he who has afflicted you, will bind up the wound. He will be a faithful friend. Confide in him now, in your affliction, and 'cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.' The Saviour has very graciously said to us, 'Come boldly unto the throne of grace, to obtain mercy, and find grace to help, in time of need.' And this is with you indeed a time of great need. You are afflicted, but is your affliction as trying as was Job's? I trust you feel no spirit of repining, no distrust of God. May this trial be sanctified to your spiritual good. May it lead you nearer to the Saviour, from whom you may have strayed. May you from henceforth live so near to God, as to influence others, by your example, to follow him."

To Mrs. M. W.—June 8, 1836.

* * * "The extent of my walk has been to Mr. Wilson's church. I rode to and from church last Sabbath. I know not when I shall walk to *our* church. I am obliged yet to be very careful. I hope, with much care, to regain

my health. I feel as if I *could* appreciate it. I had a pleasant beginning of the new year. I have of late enjoyed much spiritual communion with God; have been much alone, from choice, and have been seeking to do the will of God more than heretofore. I feel that what I intend to do for God, must be done *now*. May the year 1836 witness more 'growth in grace' in my soul, than *any previous year has done;* and when called from this to another world, may I go as a 'shock of corn fully ripe.' May you, dear M., become increasingly useful, and glorify God more and more.

Our family are in usual health, and send love to you. With much love to you and your husband, I am as ever, yours truly and hastily. Write very soon, a long, faithful letter. R. G. RUSSELL."

To Mrs. P.—June 20, 1836.

"Our little church God has blest; he has watered, and given an increase. When organized, it consisted of forty; it is now more than doubled. We now number eighty-one, and nine are to be admitted Sabbath after next. Others stand ready to make a profession soon. We feel that we have a great deal for which we should praise God; and at the same time, we should be humbled, that *we* have been so unfaithful that God could not convert *more* souls. Our Sabbath-school flourishes. A week since, there were 250 scholars present,—the largest number ever present at one time. The school is second only to the First Baptist school, in point of numbers."

The following are extracts from letters written during a visit at Amherst, Mass.:—

"*Amherst, July* 13, 1836.

If I am needed at all, don't hesitate to send me such word immediately, for I am ready, at any moment, to return home; but if I am not needed *at all*, I should like to prolong my visit a little. I am having a very fine time, enjoy myself very much. Every effort is made, on the part of Mr. and Mrs. P., that can be made, to render my visit pleasant, and indeed I think it unnecessary to make any *special effort*, for I am so pleasantly situated, I should enjoy it at any rate. * * *

Yesterday was a most delightful day, and I will tell you how I passed it. Called in the morning, with Mrs. Pitkin, on two sick persons. One was a lady who has for several months been confined with lameness, and sits with her foot in a chair, unable to bend her knee. It is an act of charity, I think, to visit her, she has been so long sick. She is an unusually interesting young lady, possessing a fine mind, well cultivated. She has a fine flow of spirits, which is unusual for one who is so much afflicted. She is a very spiritual woman, and one may gain much information from her. I hope to see her again before I leave Amherst. We then went to Mr. P.'s store, and I was weighed, because I wanted to be weighed on my *birth-day*. What do you think was my weight? Ninety-nine pounds. I really regretted not to be *one* pound heavier. In the afternoon read aloud to Mrs. P——, (which is our daily practice,) from the 'Martha's or the Varieties of Female Piety.' * * *

It is an exceedingly difficult thing to settle a pastor here, there are so many literary characters, and such a

Ride to Hartford, Ct.—"Hydrophobia" there.

body of students, who listen with critic's ears. They have had a number of candidates, but found none *perfect*. They think Mr. W. approaches *nearer* to *perfection* than any other they have had.

I enjoyed the day. It was a pleasant beginning to a new year. I enjoyed communion with God; found God a very present friend. I hope all our dear family remembered me at the throne of grace on that day. I felt confident they did."

"*Hartford, July* 20, 1836.

Monday morning we left Amherst, at nine o'clock, for Hartford. East Windsor and East Hartford are most beautiful places. Their streets are very wide, and are shaded finely by three rows of trees—one on each side, and one in the middle of the street. The houses are principally white, with green blinds; and to almost every one there is a fine garden attached, which renders it very attractive to the eye of the traveller. The principal streets are two or three miles long, and the trees almost form two arches through them. I was perfectly delighted with both places. We are at the City Hotel, in Main-street. The accommodations are very fine. It is very still here, and pleasant. There are a great many ladies here at present. They were so full, I was obliged to take a room with a Mrs. ——, of New York. I find her a very agreeable lady. She is a pious woman, and we have had some very pleasant conversation. * * *

The news of Hartford is, that there are a number of *mad dogs* about the city; five or six dogs, and two individuals were bitten yesterday, I understand; and there is considerable excitement about the hydrophobia,—and well there may be. The City Council met last evening, to de-

"A serenade."—Deems large parties wrong.

vise some means in reference to it. I have now been absent three weeks, and it seems twice as long. I have passed my time very pleasantly, and have not been homesick at all. I want very much to see you all. I think a great deal of you, and daily you are all remembered at the throne of grace, in my unworthy petitions."

"*Amherst, Aug.* 8.

Mrs. P. and myself took tea at Dr. H——'s. We had a very pleasant visit—no other company, excepting a Mr. C. and Mr. W. I am exceedingly pleased with the family. I had a long conversation with the doctor. Inquired of him about Liverpool, etc. etc. He says he was not introduced to uncle Gair. He was much pleased with Liverpool. He is a very social man. He knows Rev. Mr. Waterman very well; also Mr. Pattison, Dr. Wayland, and Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Mason,—so you see it was pleasant for me to talk about them.

About twelve, Friday night, I awoke at the sound of music immediately in front of the house. I got up and opened my window, (the blind was closed,) and sat down, till they played several very fine pieces of music. I never heard better music. It is my favorite time for music, when all is still and quiet. The serenade was given by the college band.

We were invited, on Friday likewise, to Mrs. W——'s, the widow of their former clergyman. She is a very lovely woman, and I should like to visit her. She says she shall depend on a very social visit from me, before I leave. She had designed inviting me with company, but had understood I did not visit, except in a social manner. The impression has gone out, from my refusing to attend Mrs. ——'s party, I suppose; and I am very glad it has, for I

Loves to spend Sabbaths alone.—Her ideal of good preaching.

am very decided in reference to visiting where there is much company. I have no wish to do it; nor do I think it consistent with my holy profession.

Saturday evening, I thought much of our communicants' prayer-meeting, and wished to be with our church, for it is a favorite meeting with me. I always appreciate these seasons. They are so social and free, and necessarily solemn, that it seems almost impossible not to love to be there. They are sacred seasons. * * *

Yesterday was one of the sweetest Sabbaths you can imagine. Every thing seemed to say, 'Praise ye the Lord.' I arose early; had an opportunity for meditation and prayer before mingling with the world. Spent most of the day alone, which is always pleasant to me; for when I associate with others, I am too apt to converse on worldly subjects, and thereby lose a spirit of devotion. I always wish to 'keep the Sabbath holy,' and I cannot, if I mingle much with those who will make their business, their farms, or their merchandize topics of conversation. In the morning I attended church. Mr. W. preached from 'Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God.' The sermon was very well written, very *logical*, but not very *practical*. I think there is that difficulty in all his preaching,—it is more *logical* than *practical*. I do not feel exactly satisfied with him as a preacher. He is a man of sound sense, fine talents, and a well-cultivated mind; but his sermons are not sermons that affect *my heart*. I cannot *remember* his sermons long, they are not *impressive*. They are eloquent, I allow, and they show a depth of mind not common in one so young. He is not more than twenty-four or five. After all, I prefer Mr. L——, for his sermons are not only *well written*, *good*, and well delivered; but they are practical and impressive. At noon I remained at the Sabbath-

school, to visit the infant class taught by Miss H——. It is an interesting class of forty-five children, and she is a most interesting teacher. I was much pleased with the class. I did not go out in the afternoon or evening. You probably observed your communion. I thought of it with interest. They only observe it once in two months here. They had it last month. I enjoyed the afternoon and evening at home. Had sweet communion with God. It was a precious Sabbath to me. I really enjoyed it. I have enjoyed my religious privileges here, and most of the time have found God a *present God.*"

"*Amherst, Aug.* 12.

Sometime before I left home, I made my journey and visit a special subject of prayer before God, that he would make it a blessing to me,—keep me from temptation, or enable me to resist it,—and not suffer me to set an unholy example in this place; but 'so to live, as others might take knowledge of me that I had been with Jesus.' Ever since I arrived here, I have felt a peculiar desire to be near to God, and to exert a holy influence over others. I have found God very near me, 'on my right hand, and on my left,' and it has been sweet to commune with him. I have observed regular seasons for devotion, and have usually enjoyed them. Mrs. P. is much more spiritual than I ever knew her before. We have many pleasant seasons together, and find them profitable. We remember the *circles of prayer* in our prayer-meetings. I am happy to find, that at your meetings the 'absent ones are not forgotten;' truly it is a pleasant thought, and I thank *you*, dear Ann, for *your* '*remembrance* of me in your prayers.' If you *must* forget me any where, let it *not* be in *your closet.* * * *

Attachment of Christians to visiting in parties mysterious.

When, oh when *will* the church arise, and dedicate herself to God? Let me still have an interest in your prayers.

Ever your affectionate REBECCA."

"*August* 15.

Parties are raging here to quite an extent. It is the season when almost every family makes one. There is but little *social* visiting in Amherst. I have been invited to several parties, but invariably decline. Friday evening was invited to Mrs. ——'s, at a '*small party*.' But there were between *thirty* and *forty* present. Was very glad I did not accept. I could not consistently visit in parties. Mrs. P—— has been intending to make two '*small parties*' this week; but I have prevailed upon her, I believe, to defer it till I have gone home. When she named over those she designed inviting tomorrow evening, they amounted to *forty*, and doubtless the one on Friday evening would have been still larger. Very *small parties*, don't you think so? I do truly dislike *parties*, and it is quite a mystery to me how these good people can love them so well. They are composed chiefly of professors of religion, and they think that as that is the case, there is no sin; but I view it differently. I think the sin is *tenfold* greater. I presume I am accounted very odd not to accept any of their polite invitations, but can't help it.

Yesterday (Sunday) I did not go to the *church* at all, but went all day to the College Chapel, to hear Rev. Professor P——. He is considered *one of the very best preachers* to be found. His health is very feeble, and he preaches but seldom; and when it is ascertained he is to preach, the chapel is thronged with people from the village. He is a most powerful preacher. His sermons are *inter-*

Sermon of Professor P.—"Particular seat for writing home."

esting, instructive, solemn, impressive, practical, eloquent. I know not the man to go before him. * * *

In the afternoon, it was a sermon descriptive of our Saviour's agony in the garden of Gethsemane, Luke xxii, 44. It was one of the most solemn and impressive sermons I ever heard. A death-like stillness pervaded the house. Every eye was fixed on him, and every countenance was solemn. It would be next to impossible for an audience to listen to *such* a discourse, and not be affected. I wish I could give you some idea of the sermon, but I cannot. I endeavored to take notes, but could not."

"*Amherst, Aug.* 18.

I am now seated in my dear little room, enjoying the privilege of writing to my very dear parents. I have one particular seat which I occupy in writing all my letters, and they have not been *very few*, (sixteen before this,) and here I love to sit. 'Tis the seat I choose when I am going to sit down and think of *home* and *friends*. In a few days I start for home. Mr. P., I believe, has concluded to accept the invitation I have given him to accompany me. He designs visiting P. this fall, and thinks he can leave as well *about* that time as any—if not on *Monday*, probably within a day or two of it. If he goes, he takes his own carriage, and you know that will be delightful to me, for I abhor a stage above all things. * * * I am glad to hear so favorable accounts of sister E., and am inclined to think I shall meet her on the road, with her babe on her back. I hope she will not name her little one till I return, for I have a name for him. It is not Nichodemus, nor Belshazzar, nor Job, nor Lot,—but a name that is worthy of his honor. She must certainly wait for it. * * *

Mrs. P., together with Mr. P. have been very kind to me, and I feel under very great obligation to them. You inquire about my riding horse-back. I have not had even one ride on horse-back yet, and presume I shall not. The ladies do not ride very much here, and I think it too violent an exercise for me."

"*Providence, Sept.* 7, 1836.
Commencement morning.

MY DEAR MRS. P.,—I cannot feel willing to have your husband leave us, without sending you a line. I feel truly grateful for your unbounded kindness towards me while visiting in your family. I trust I am not insensible to your kindness, and I feel under great obligations to you all. My visit was extremely pleasant, and I think of great advantage to my health; and I hope it was a blessing to my *spiritual* health. I deeply regret my *unfaithfulness* while in Amherst, and fear that my influence was very *unsalutary*. I could have done much for my Saviour there, but for the coldness of my heart. Remember me to the sisters of the praying circle, and tell them to raise higher the standard of holiness in their hearts. The present age of the world requires it, and now is the time for action. I hope your meetings will be well sustained, and the dear sisters be faithful to their Master's cause. I shall think of you Thursday afternoons. * * *

I cannot bear to stop, but must. With a great deal of love, I am as ever,

Yours very affectionately, REBECCA."

Those who have followed these extracts in their details of Christian activity and enjoyment, will be interested to obtain a glance at the closet of the subject of our sketch.

In her journal she alludes again to music at her window at dead of night. Its influence was far different from that usually experienced from such a source. It led her "to contemplate her home in the skies." She wrote at evening, on the next day:—

"Saturday, July 6th. I was awaked about twelve last night by the sound of music directly before our house. We had a fine *serenade*. Delightful music, by the '*college band*.' I have enjoyed this day; had nearness to God; had a season of special interest at twilight—of self-examination and prayer.

I am still reading 'Mason on Self-Knowledge,'—and the more I read it, the more am I convinced of the vast importance of the work. I feel that I am but little acquainted with myself."

The following journal entry occurs, dated,—

"Friday, 12th. Was invited to attend a *party*. Declined, saying, 'I do not visit in parties.' Strange, passing strange, that Christians here give and attend so many parties; I cannot see into it."

At different times she wrote:—

"I to-day accidentally heard some remarks in reference to 'my piety—my holy walk.' It so *humbled* me that I embraced the earliest opportunity of prostrating myself before God, and weeping over the subject. Alas! that I have so deceived my friends here. Do they think me a devoted Christian? Would that I were one. But I am sadly deficient. My influence here is unsalutary. I act not as a Christian. I trust the remark which I accidentally overheard will be a means of leading me nearer to the throne of grace, and trusting more in the Saviour. I need to be broken down—to be subdued. Pride, that bane to

the soul, lurks within me, and I find myself too eager of the good opinion of others. 'Break, sovereign grace, this heart of stone.'

This evening I should have gone to the conference, but for the pain in my back. It is very severe to-night. I feel discouraged about its ever being any better. It is too deeply rooted a pain, I think, to be ever removed. I have not enjoyed much of God's presence though this Sabbath. Finished reading 'Phillips on Redemption,' this evening. It is interesting, though I was somewhat disappointed in it. It did not answer my expectations. Oh, what unspeakable gratitude should fill every heart, for the glorious plan of redemption, purchased by a Saviour's blood. Wonderful grace—matchless love.

I have been here now nearly seven weeks, and shall probably remain near two weeks longer. I have been thinking to-day of my influence here. I am unwilling to spend near seven weeks in Amherst, and the place be none the better for my having been here. I wish to exert a holy influence here, so that when I am dead, Amherst will remember me."

This prayer was answered. In connection with this paragraph, the following remarks are interesting:—

"Mr. Webster," said a lady in Amherst, after his wife's death, "has suffered a very great loss. We knew Mrs. Webster's worth. Many here *remember her influence* with gratitude."

After her return to Providence, she penned the following in her journal:—

"Had a most refreshing season in prayer this morning; felt to bring the different members of the church before God, in view of their different and diversified situations in life."

Urges preparation for the "journey of death."

The following closes a letter to her brother, which was written near the last of December:—

"And now one word about the soul, for after all, that is about the only thing of much importance in this world. We are placed in this world of probation, to prepare for that which is to come. Were you expecting to take a journey to some distant place, would you not be *preparing* for that journey,—and be careful to have every thing in readiness before you started? And are you *not* expecting to take a journey to a distant place?—another world? And what preparation are you making for it? Are you ready to start? Have you made the needful preparations? Would it not be well to commence a preparation as you commence a new year. Soon you will leave this world of trial and disappointments, and enter upon the untried scenes of eternity. Oh, be wise, in making preparations for the exchange. *Do not* procrastinate. Begin your new year by repenting of your sins, and giving your heart to God. That such may be your decision, is, and shall be, the fervent prayer of your affectionate sister,

REBECCA."

CHAPTER XI.

EFFORTS OF MRS. WEBSTER AS SECRETARY OF LADIES' SOCIETIES.

Annual Report of the Female Bethel Society.

"In the month of March, 1831, a teacher in the Beneficent Sabbath-school, wishing to excite a spirit of benevolence in the members of her class, proposed to them to meet together once a fortnight, and devote some time to making useful articles, the avails of which should be appropriated to some beneficent object, not then decided upon. Only *two* of them, however, felt sufficiently interested to attend such a meeting; but *they*, with their teacher, commenced, and sustained their meeting for more than a year,—encouraged and assisted by a beloved sister of the church, who has since gone to her eternal home. Feeling that with but three individuals, they should accomplish very little, they proposed to invite the teachers and older scholars of the Sabbath-school to unite with them and organize a society. Accordingly a society was organized in July, 1832, consisting of twelve members, and was called the 'Young Ladies' Association.' But as there was no specified object to which its charities were to be appropriated, little interest was manifested in the society, by its members,—and for a time it languished, and seemed to struggle for life; and we feared, that through discouragement, it would become extinct. But God preserved and kept it alive. At our first anniversary, it was thought advisable to invite the members of the Beneficent Church to

unite with us, and to specify some object to which our funds should be appropriated; and we thank God, for putting it into our hearts to decide that *that* object should be the 'Seaman's cause,'—and our association a 'Bethel Association.'

We extract from an address of Rev. Edwin Stevens, Seamen's Chaplain for the port of Canton, before the master officers and seamen of that port, the following beautiful description of the *origin* of the word Bethel:—'Near four thousand years ago, in a distant land of the west, there was a solitary man—an exile from his father's house, travelling to another country, with only his pilgrim's staff. When night came on him, in the way, he took some stones and made himself a traveller's pillow, and laid him down to sleep, forgetful of Him that protected him. But God came to him in sleep, and opened the eyes of his mind, to behold heaven and the angels ascending and descending, and the God of his fathers standing above. There he promised to keep the poor wanderer in all his way; to make of him a great nation, and that from his seed the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, should come. When Jacob awoke from sleep, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And he called the name of that place "*Bethel*," which is, being interpreted, *the house of God*. And he took his pillow of stone, and set it up, and poured oil upon it, saying, "This stone, which I have set for a pillow, shall be God's house." And this is the way the word "*Bethel*" began. Little thought that pilgrim that the name would be handed down through so many nations, and tongues,—and finally, that in the last days of the church, it would be read on the Seamen's flag throughout the world. But a higher than he designed it, and our eyes see it in these latter days.'

Sailors often heathen.

The importance of the subject which has brought us together to-day, can scarcely be called in question by any who feel for perishing souls, and earnestly desire the salvation of their fellow-beings, who are passing every year to the world of spirits in darkness and pollution. Should we be accused of misapplying language, when we say of the poor sailor, as we ordinarily find him, that he is almost in the darkness and pollution of heathenism? Are not the great body of these unfortunates, though they sail from *Christian* ports, and land at *Christian* ports—are they not, in the strictest sense, *heathen?* When landed on *pagan* shores, straightway they are in the *thickest*, and the *worst* of pagan iniquity—and too destitute of religious concern to mingle *even* in pagan worship! And when they land on *Christian* shores, the impurity and crime of their brief sojourn would oftentimes put the better heathen to the blush. But while the degraded moral character of seamen, with few exceptions, calls for our sympathy and exertion, their *number* adds force to the same consideration. It is estimated that 900 seamen annually visit this port, and 20,000 the port of New York; that there are 100,000 seamen in the United States; nearly 500,000 in Great Britain; and in the world, between two and three millions. It is then *a nation of almost three millions of men* for whom our tears, and prayers, and alms, are solicited to-day. Seamen have many peculiar claims on our sympathies and efforts. Even if sober-minded, how cut off are they from the ordinary means of grace. How surely will the sailor be without the consolation of the religion of Christ, unless reached directly or indirectly by such an institution as the 'Seamen's Friend Society.' 'It is interesting to observe how the history of the Saviour connects itself with this class of men. Who can think of his associating with them; of his

preaching from their vessels; of his calling them to be his apostles, without feeling himself identified with Christ in these labors of benevolence?' How familiar are they with toil and hardship, and that for *our* comfort and aggrandizement. 'There is a generosity in the sailor's character which is *proverbial*, and which often exhibits itself in the *heedless* and *wasteful* expenditure of his gains. But let this tendency be turned into the channel of benevolence, and there is opened a new source of revenue for doing good.' While we are sending the gospel to the heathen, shall we suffer that class of men, who are the great connecting link between the nations of the earth, and who could do much, if Christians themselves, to commend Christianity to those, who now have either no knowledge, or have erroneous and degrading impressions concerning it; *shall* we suffer them to famish for the bread of life, or keep them in a state of heathenism, without the means of salvation? We are accustomed to look upon the sailor as being *more hardened* than any other class of men. Doubtless many of them are hardened. But let the Christian world inquire *how* have they *become* so? Through *whose* neglect and prejudice have they waxed worse and worse, and become so depraved as we find them? If they who have had the key of knowledge, and have in a measure entered in themselves, had opened the door to outcast *mariners*, and invited and *besought* their entrance, we might not have it to say at this time, 'They are so hardened, it is of *no use* to try to reform them.' The Gospel, through God, can save the *chief of sinners*. Let us test its transforming power. Yet hardened as sailors ordinarily are amid the temptations of the land, on the sea they are capable of very serious impressions from divine truth. Says a ship-master, sailing from Boston:—'Sailors differ from

"Seamen not worldly-minded at sea."—Claims of the Society.

other men in some respects. They are not so worldly-minded. After they have been out two or three weeks at sea, they are as ready to hear religious instructions as any class of men. *Our vessel* seems to be a *world* to *us*. Excluded from a host of temptations, in this situation the ever-active mind of man is easily attracted by divine truth, if exhibited aright, and with a right spirit.'

The past year, the Ladies' Bethel Association have had seventeen meetings; the average attendance has been only six. Notwithstanding an *effort* has *twice* been made to enlarge the society, and awaken a more *general interest* in behalf of the *claims* of Seamen, we at present number but twenty-seven members. The amount received into the treasury since the organization has been $217,69;—amount expended for the purchase of articles, $76,02;—$100 has been sent to the American Seamen's Friend Society.

Such, Christian friends, is the *condition*, and such the *prospects* of the 'Ladies' Bethel Society.' It remains for you to say what accession shall be made to its *means*, and its *members* to-day. We have an *influence to exert*, as well as *personal duties to perform*. Will you *aid* us in exerting a salutary influence on the sailor's behalf? Will you account these personal duties *your own?* 'The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.'

Respectfully submitted by

R. G. RUSSELL, *Secretary*.

Providence, R. I., July 15, 1835."

She presented the following at the next meeting:—

* * * "That seamen have a claim upon our sympathy, our efforts, and our prayers, none *can* doubt. And shall the church of Christ, follow the example of the merchant, to enlarge and enrich herself at their expense, without endeavoring to make them equally partakers of the benefits of salvation? Let the church arise, and in all places where seamen are found, labor for their good. Let every branch of the church of Christ, labor and pray for the conversion of seamen. Let it not be said of *our seamen*, as it was said in the Bible of the one poor man, 'who by his wisdom delivered a city,' that '*no one remembered that same poor man.*'

Considerable interest has been manifested in the sailor's cause, the past year, and we hope *that* interest will *increase* and spread, till something may be done in this city of 20,000 inhabitants, for the temporal and spiritual happiness of the nine hundred seamen, who annually visit this port. Let us commend the cause of seamen to the sympathies, and the prayers, and the liberal charities of all who desire the salvation of men, and the conversion of the world. Let the 'abundance of the seas be converted' to God, and the 'abundance of the land rejoice together in the glory of the Lord.'

Respectfully submitted by

R. G. RUSSELL, *Secretary.*

Providence, Oct. 11, 1836."

Sailors often a barrier to the gospel.

The Fifth Annual Report of the Ladies' Bethel Association.

"The irreversible decree of Heaven has gone forth, that 'this world shall be converted to Jesus Christ;' and the conversion of seamen is an important instrumentality to be employed for the accomplishment of this glorious object. In no way can the gospel be sent to heathen shores earlier, than by converting seamen; because by doing this, we not only prepare the way directly, to remove the prejudices of the heathen against the Christian religion, caused by the wicked conduct of sailors, but we make of sailors so many foreign missionaries. Let the seamen generally become pious; let their ships become floating chapels; let them recommend Christianity by their example wherever they go; and not only will a great barrier to the progress of the gospel be removed, but facilities for its progress be provided. Then seamen would become helpers to missionaries in all the various ports they visit, instead of being, as they now are, hindrances to the gospel. The piety of a converted sailor, flows constantly in a warmer current, gushing forth from his heart,—and wherever he goes, he will preach 'Christ crucified;' and *none* can speak *more eloquently* of the love of a Saviour.

Seamen are the representatives of one people to another, the connecting link between the nations, and it is of immense importance that they should possess the spirit of the gospel, and that their lives should be regulated by the word of God. The conversion of seamen is a practicable thing; although the *greatness* of the work, and its *apparent impracticability*, has often found entrance to our minds, with a disheartening influence, discouraging to all new efforts. We have felt, perhaps without acknowledging it

even to our own thoughts, that the real conversion of this class of men was a work too great to be accomplished, or that if done, it must be by some supernatural interposition of divine power, which would supercede *human* instrumentality. But these feelings are done away; and it is too late to assert, that it will not do *much*, if *any* good to labor for seamen. We don't believe it. The Lord has commanded the gospel to be preached to *them;* it was intended for them, and it will save them. The conversion of seamen is *second* to no other Christian enterprise. 'If the world is to be converted,' says one, 'the men of the tribe of Zebulon must be converted first, and they will then carry the gospel and its ministers to every land. It was with the tribe of Zebulon at Nazareth, that our Saviour found an asylum for eighteen years before he began to publish the glad tidings of salvation; and when he came out from there, he took twelve of them—twelve sailors to be his life-guard; and they were the missionaries he sent out to preach his gospel throughout the world.'

A writer has recently remarked, in enumerating some encouragements to the seamen's cause, 'that a change in public sentiment and feeling has been created.' 'Formerly,' says he, 'it was thought to be almost useless to make an effort to reclaim a sailor; he was esteemed a lost and hopeless being; his habits were regarded as unalterably fixed; and even the faith of the devoted Christian was too weak to trust the power of divine grace to effect a saving change in the sons of the ocean.' Not only so, but very *few*, if *any*, ever cared for them, or at all considered their miserable condition.

In view of this subject, are any ready to inquire, 'What have I to do with the seamen's cause? I am not reminded by the winds and storms of autumn of *friends at sea*, for

whose temporal and spiritual welfare I need be concerned. I can sit quietly at my fireside and enjoy sweet intercourse with *my friends* at *home*. You have a *family circle*, but the *sailor's circle* is the *circle of the heavens*.

But *all* have something to do with the seamen's cause. There is a sense in which every man is his 'brother's keeper,' and it is the great secret of benevolence rightly to understand the responsibilities arising from our social relations, and then, as stewards of God, freely to dispense the blessings which he has committed to our trust for our fellow-men. The religion of Christ no sooner reaches men as objects of mercy, than it constitutes them agents in extending that mercy to others. And such is the fulness of the divine provision, and the variety and efficacy of the means he has appointed, that fidelity in the use of means, has almost uniformly been attended with success; and on the other hand, where the means of salvation are not used for ourselves or others, the end is not obtained. Hence, at this distant day from the death of Christ, the nations are still lying in darkness, because the men who were God's depositaries of the gospel for mankind, have not dispensed it as they were commanded. *Is there, can there* be cause sufficient, to justify any one for stopping his ear, and closing his eye, and shutting his hand, when the sailor's tale is told?

When we consider the immense number of seamen that traverse the mighty deep; when we consider their exposure to vice; their perils at sea; the very few opportunities they enjoy of religious instruction; the advantages they possess of advancing religion in the world,—or if they are so disposed of hindering its progress; when these things are considered, the importance of their conversion is most manifest. And how shall the conversion of seamen be

effected? Why, in the same way as the conversion of other men is effected,—by the special operations of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the use of the ordinary means of grace. To some extent, seamen are possessed of the necessary means. The Bible is put into their hands; places of public worship are now provided in many of our commercial towns, and nothing appears to be wanting but the influences of the Holy Spirit.

But it may be, and often is asked, what the Bethel Association of Providence are doing for seamen? We are compelled to answer—*very little.*

Another year's experience, has convinced us more and more, that the permanent usefulness of this society requires that we should have a 'Seamen's Temperance Boarding-House,'—one convenient of access by seamen,—where all the various institutions for their temporal and spiritual benefit could be brought together. A register office, depositary of Bibles and Tracts, with a library and reading-room, should all be under one roof. The whole would be eminently calculated to exert a good influence upon seamen and landsmen. Many seamen are already pledged and consistent members of the Temperance Society, and on their arrival here, 'true to ther principles, and resolving to keep out of the way of temptation, they traverse our streets, in hopes of finding a "*Sailor's home,*" where the accursed poison is not permitted to enter, and where they could take their Bibles and books and spend their leisure hours like rational men.' But to the shame of this Christian community be it told, no such place in Providence can be found. 'There is no alternative, therefore, but to seek shelter in one of those misnomers, called "sailor's boarding-house,"—selecting of course the most *decent*, if it be not

a paradox to speak of *decency* keeping company with rum, gin, and brandy.'

The location of our city, makes it a prominent point in the maritime affairs of the state, and its influence must extend far and wide. How important then, not only that the gospel be permanently preached here, but that the temporal welfare of our seamen be provided for. How grateful must it be to him to find a retreat, where he may securely repose, after the dangers he has encountered; and if sick, to have his wants kindly attended to; when out of the way, to be admonished, and encouraged to go up to the house of prayer. Our merchants and ship-owners, forgetful of the claims of seamen upon *them*, have discovered a surprising apathy in regard to them,—consequently the 'Bethel Association' is compelled to be the pioneer in this great and noble work. 'She has thrown down her gauntlet;' they have refused to take it up, and she now goes forth alone, determined to repay part of that debt she owes the sailor.

Liberal contributions have been made, and others pledged, the last year, to our treasury, provided something should be done for our own seamen. In the spring an effort was made to establish a 'boarding-house,' which, owing to the peculiar pressure of the times, proved unsuccessful. The question *now* is, will we make *another effort?* There is encouragement for the *attempt*. We are sanguine in the belief that the work *can* be done. Our funds have been retained in the treasury the past year for this purpose; and with the additional subscriptions of the coming year—with such donations as we may receive from a liberal community, we have reason to think the work can be accomplished.

A barque dedicated by religious services.

A new interest seems to have been awakened the last year; quarterly meetings have been regularly held, which have kept alive *our* interest, and have *awakened* an interest in *others*. We invited Rev. Mr. Taylor, of Boston, to visit us in April, and present the claims of seamen before the public. He complied with our request, and preached on that subject to a crowded audience,—after which a collection was taken, to aid our association, amounting to about $100.

Our present number of members is 171, being an increase of 125 since our last report. During the last year, two of our number have been called from their active labors on earth; one of whom, Mrs. David Whipple, was a member of your Board of Managers; and although unable by reason of *protracted sickness*, to attend our meetings, or engage actively in the business of the society, ever evinced a lively interest in the temporal and spiritual welfare of the 'weather-beaten' sons of the ocean: and while we lament that we shall 'see her face no more,' we mourn not as those without hope,—our loss is her eternal gain; she *died in the Lord*, and now 'rests from her labors.'

It may be interesting to the Association, to know that Bethel meetings are held each Sabbath morning, on board some vessel, upon which the Bethel flag is hoisted. The services are performed by the City Missionary. A large number of the seamen who are in port attend, and listen with interest to the truths of the gospel. Religious services were held, a few Sabbaths since, on board a *new barque*, previous to her going out to sea, when Rev. Dr. Tucker preached an interesting and solemn discourse. Many seamen were present who appeared to be deeply interested, and we hope the 'bread thus cast upon the waters will return after many days.'

In conclusion, allow us to ask, 'who that loves the prosperity of Zion, and prays "thy kingdom come," can look with indifference upon the seamen's cause?'

Respectfully submitted by

R. G. RUSSELL, *Secretary.*

Providence, Oct. 17, 1837."

It is proper to append the statement, that the appeal here made was not without effect. The proposed "boarding-house" was soon in successful operation.—The deceased author of this report was very affectionately and respectfully mentioned at the anniversary of the Association succeeding her death.

Extract from the First Annual Report of the High-street Female Foreign Missionary Society.

[Presented Jan. 18, 1837.]

* * * "In consideration of our responsibilities to God, as a church, to send the 'knowledge of salvation to those who sit in the region and shadow of death,' this society was organized. Its *foundation*, we confidently believe, was laid in prayer. Previous to its formation, every sister of the church was visited, to ascertain her views and feelings in relation to it,—and printed cards were presented to each, showing the wants of the heathen, and our obligation to *aid* in sending them the gospel. Each one was requested to consider and pray over the subject, prior to deciding what she would do. The result of these visits, and the circulation of the cards was favorable. Nearly every sister of the church gladly contributed of her substance, and on the day our society was formed, Feb. 9th, we had

the pleasure of placing $100 in the hands of our treasurer, which amount was transmitted to the American Board, to constitute Rev. Mrs. Lewis a life-member of the American Society. An earnest appeal from the American Board, for funds to relieve them from their pecuniary embarrassment, was listened to by the society in August, and by means of a special effort, $40 was raised in their behalf.

Our present number of members is seventy-seven; eight have removed from the city within the last few months. We have held monthly meetings for prayer and missionary intelligence through the year, which have been interesting and profitable. The average attendance has been about fifteen. * * *

Respectfully submitted by

R. G. RUSSELL, *Secretary*."

Second Annual Report of the High-street Female Foreign Missionary Society.

"Centuries have rolled away, since our divine Redeemer, when about to be received up into heaven, commissioned his disciples to 'go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;' and declared it to be his purpose that this world should be converted to himself. Every year, while it brings us nearer to that consummation, furnishes palpable evidence of its approach, in the success afforded to the various benevolent enterprises of the day. The conversion of a *world* is a great work, and yet God sees fit to employ *human instrumentality*, to accomplish his vast designs. The work which he gives his children to do on earth is immense; and the ways in which he employs them are innumerable. Each individual has certain talents to occupy, and particular duties to perform, and it

Missionary effort only commenced.—Who is willing to have no part in God's work?

is important that he should diligently inquire by what method he can best promote the interests of our holy religion, and do the greatest amount of good, during the little time allotted him to work in the vineyard of the Lord.

In assembling to-day to celebrate our second anniversary, the members of this Association would desire to be very grateful to God, for the manifestations of his goodness and his love to them during the last year; in permitting our ranks to remain unbroken by death; and in opening the hearts of our members to contribute liberally of their substance to the treasury of the Lord.

We have at present seventy-six members; nine of our number have removed. Our meetings for prayer and missionary intelligence have been regularly observed, and sustained by an average attendance of between fourteen and fifteen members. Much interesting missionary intelligence has been presented at these meetings, from the Nestorian and other missionary stations. It is earnestly desired that many more, during the year upon which we are now entered, will avail themselves of the privilege of meeting with us; of mingling their prayers with ours; and unite with us in devising ways in which we may best promote the cause in which we are engaged.

A boundless field of labor opens before us. As yet we have accomplished very little. We have only *commenced* the work,—have but just put our hand to the plough, and we dare not look back. All things around and beyond us, in the moral and spiritual state of mankind seem to bid us *advance*. The call to go *forward*, is too loud to be *misunderstood*, too piercing and solemn to be *disregarded*. Oh that the magnitude of this work could be seen and felt. *Who* is willing to stand by, and have *no* part in such an enterprise—such a glorious work? * * *

The work will be finished. But shall it be finished without *our aid—our* instrumentality? *Who* will not resolve to have a part in it, that he may be ready to sing the triumph of that day, when 'the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High?'

Respectfully submitted by

R. G. RUSSELL, *Secretary.*

Providence, Jan. 17, 1838."

The following was voluntarily read, on Sept. 20, 1838, at the prayer-meeting, the commencement of which is referred to on page 26.

From Sept. 1837, *to Sept.* 1838.

"Connected with this church there are thirty-two young ladies, who we think should be considered members of this praying circle. Many of this number are habitually absent from our meetings; quite a number are occasionally present; and a few only can be considered *regular* and constant attendants. At the fifty-two meetings held the past year, the average attendance has been only ten. The greatest number present at any meeting during the year, was twenty-two; the least number, three.

Since the first of June, we have had fifteen meetings, the average attendance has been but *seven.* During this period, sixteen of the thirty-two have never attended at all; and of the remaining sixteen, two have been present but once; two, twice; two, four times; one, five; one, six; three, seven; one, eight; two, eleven; one, thirteen; one, fifteen.

Reasons for absence.—"God faithful—professors unfaithful."

Here I will give the names of sixteen who have attended, with the number of times each has been present: * * * The sixteen who have not attended at all, are as follows: * * * Three have been most, or all of the time absent from the city. One has been ill herself, and is now unable to attend the meetings in consequence of the charge of an infant. One does not attend on account of deafness, which prevents her hearing any of the exercises of our meetings. The cause of the *habitual* absence of the remaining eleven, remains to be ascertained.

R. G. RUSSELL.

Providence, R. I., Sept. 20, 1838."

In December she presented the following, also on a similar occasion:—

"At the close of a year, the thought naturally arises, how many who started with us at the commencement of this year, are now numbered with the dead?

And the prospect of as many dying, the year upon which we are soon to enter is as serious, as the fact that so many have fallen into their graves during the past year. Another year will soon be gone; but we may not live to see its close. The retrospect of the year shows that we have been highly favored. Surely the eye of the Lord has been over us from the beginning of the year to its close. We are met to-day for the last time in the year 1838. Twelve months have passed away since eleven of us assembled to bear testimony to the Lord's goodness, the year just then ending, and to invoke a continuance of his favor during the succeeding year. God has been *faithful*, but *we* very *unfaithful*. For all our short-comings may we be suitably humbled, and learn wisdom from the con-

sequences of our remissness. Since our quarterly report, in September, we have had thirteen meetings. The average attendance has been nine. Of the thirty members, twenty-four have attended in the course of the three months. * * * Six have not met with us at all, but there is reason to believe most of them would gladly avail themselves of the opportunity were they able. * * *

May we this year, dear sisters, do more than ever for our own growth in grace, and for the welfare of Zion; and as in travel on our way heavenward, let us bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; interceding, each for all, that we may walk as pilgrims and strangers, who expect soon to become fellow-citizens of the saints in glory. Commencing a new era of time, would it not be well to secure the favor of the Most High? And let future days, or years, bear witness to our allegiance to the King of kings? To look forward a year! It is a precious, an invaluable period of time. Oh that we may be wise, to make the most of the year that is before us. What new plans for doing good can we devise? Or how best improve those already adopted? May the Lord help us to labor faithfully, and if we meet no more on earth in the social prayer-meeting, may we be prepared to meet eventually at the right-hand of our God.

R. G. RUSSELL.

Providence, Dec. 25, 1838."

These selections, from a variety of similar documents, are sufficient to show her interest, and her activity as one of the officers of charitable societies, etc. at Providence.

Morbid public taste respecting courtship, as a part of biography.

CHAPTER XII.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

AFFECTION for earthly friends often *interferes* with piety. The subject of this memoir made it *subserve* her growth in grace. Love to God appears *prominent* in *her views of marriage.*

We find in Christian parents' counsels to sons and daughters, published by various authors, abundant and excellent thoughts respecting "courtship and marriage." We find the popular literature of the day diversified and *degraded* by romantic love-adventures, calculated to poison, rather than to bless. But we find, with here and there a meagre exception, that Christian biography passes over this subject with scarcely an allusion. Correspondence on this topic is almost entirely omitted. Public taste, which demands the introduction of so much on this theme that is both *fictitious* and *factitious* into our magazines, monthlies, and annuals, is generally suffered to shut it out from sketches of actual, and particularly *religious* life.

Hence such scenes are generally withheld by survivors. Such letters rarely reach the biographer's table. But a sense of duty to the living, who may profit by her example, and of justice to the character of the dead, which appears to great advantage in this connection, has led to the selections on this subject which follow. Miss Russell appears in the simplicity of ardent and predominant love for Christ, even when we view her as anticipating wedded life. After much consultation with the judicious and the pious who

Severe criticism expected.—Reasons for introducing this chapter.

knew her in life, this decision has been forced upon the compiler's mind. It may call forth, and probably will call forth severe criticism, and that from some who will notwithstanding read this portion of the book *first*, and with *deepest interest*. But if it promotes human welfare, and leads others to love Christ before all earthly love, and to regard matrimonial engagements as she did, by the light of eternity, the effort will find its reward. It scarcely need be said, that there was a severe conflict in the mind most interested in these tender reminiscences, before any such papers were permitted to leave his hands. He referred the subject to others in whom he could confide, and in conformity to their opinion, consented to permit the publication of "only such selections as would disclose that consecration to Christ of all her other affections, which rendered her influence so happy in life and in memory." He also wished, "if any thing on this subject should appear in print, that her experience might be so fully portrayed as to be a means of assisting others, under similar circumstances, to resist any assaults of the arch destroyer, designed to lead their hearts away from God, and his service, such as she experienced, and at length overcame."

The following letter speaks for itself, in this place:—

"*Dec.* 26, 1835.

EVER DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER,—I cannot realize that you are married, and that Providence is no longer your home. And is it so? Yes truly is it. More than three months have passed since you became a *wife*. And, my dear sister, the station you occupy is no ordinary one, you are a pastor's wife, the shepherdess of a flock. Do you realize your tremendous responsibility? Are you doing all in that station which God requires? Are you faithful

to your trust? Let conscience answer. Far differently would it affect you, were these questions asked you by the King Eternal! Then, how would you feel? Although he asks them not now, there will be a time when he will ask questions, far more solemn, more trying than these, and in your answers you cannot deceive him. Let me ask you affectionately, if you are doing *all* in your power to assist your husband in promoting Christ's cause, in the village where you are? Are you faithful to *him?* Do you urge him to be more faithful to *your soul*—to his *church*—to his *congregation?* Do you urge him to be *more prayerful, more devoted, more consistent?* Are you a *help-meet* or a *hindrance* to him in the cause of Christ? *As his wife*, are you a consistent, prayerful, devoted, self-denying woman? Are you a blessing to the church, to the congregation, to the Sabbath-school? In short, are you what you should be? * * *

Now, my dear sister, I wish you would write me a good faithful letter. Tell me *my* sins, point them out, faithfully. Tell me my duties. I expect you to be faithful to me, and shall be disappointed if you are not. Do you inquire after my spiritual health? I am sadly negligent of duty. I am not sufficiently prayerful; do not attend strictly to self-examination; too seldom study God's word. I have been for a year in the school of affliction, and have been sorely chastised. Yet I have been a truant scholar. Too little benefit have I reaped from my affliction. Oh, my dear sister, what can be the reason, I do not profit by such chastisements? 'Tis strange I am so much absorbed in earthly things, while God's hand is upon me correcting me. Well, I shall by and by see my folly. I shall then bitterly lament my condition. I have had a cold heart of late; yet at times I have felt something of the spirit of

Declines receiving "particular attentions."

Christ. Sabbath evening I was alone, and had a very precious evening—secret communion with God. Oh, for such seasons often. I thank you for your remembrance of me at the mercy-seat. * * *

My bodily health is, I hope, improving. I have been out and passed a day. (I rode however.) I hope soon to be able to walk.

Accept this, with much love, from your sister in Christ,

REBECCA."

A number of selections, of different dates, are here inserted, showing her views of duty on this subject, as it was presented before her acquaintance with Rev. Mr. Webster, and also to show that her walk was with God, in circumstances which, in a degree at least, lead most youth away from him, even if they possess piety.

"Monday, ——. Received a communication from Mr. ——, on the 24th, requesting a private interview with me, to converse on a *special subject*. Was exceedingly surprised. Answered it on the 26th, and this evening met him. I declined receiving his '*particular* attentions.' Perceived he was grieved, but felt that such a step would not promote my own happiness, or advance Christ's kingdom, for the present at least.

Wednesday, ——. Yesterday received another letter from my friend. Was equally surprised as at the first. He expressed a dissatisfaction with the interview of Monday evening, and requested another interview; likewise a reply to his letter. Have made *this* a *special subject* of prayer to-day,—and after much anxiety, perplexity, and trial, felt it my duty to return an answer to him, *positively* declining the connection proposed. It has been a trying day to me."

"Thoughts of *engagement* in marriage."

Although able thus summarily to *decide* in this case, it gave rise to the following memoranda:—

"I wish never to form any engagement without having in view the glory of God,—indeed without having *that* the paramount object. I trust God's glory was consulted in *this* case—I *know* it was. The subject of matrimony is not one upon which I often *dwell*—although I sometimes *think*. I give myself no uneasiness. If God sees fit to call me to occupy the station of a wife, I hope to be willing to do it; if not, I am very happy in my present state. Wherever I *am*, or whatever I *do*, I hope to act and live for God."

It was in relation to a request for her hand and heart, that she wrote at a subsequent period:—

"I have considered the request much. I have consulted my parents, and one or two friends. I have prayed over it; I have enlisted the prayers of two Christian friends in my behalf; but God alone can direct. I am willing—I am anxious God should rule. To-day I have felt as if I must decide negatively. There are with me but *two questions*, viz:—My own individual happiness, and the glory of God. I feel to-day as if neither would be promoted, and if I am but once *convinced of this*, the question is decided. I have looked at it in every light possible, and now wish to act consistently with the will of God."

This record does not close her history as one whose companionship in life was deemed by many of her acquaintance desirable. Again she wrote:—

"Received a long letter from ——, over which I have shed many tears. I have been much perplexed this week.

Grateful for permission to leave this subject to God.—Twenty-first birth-day.

In answering his letter, I proposed to-day as a day of prayer for divine direction over *this subject*, and *requested him* to *observe it*. I have felt a perfect submission to God's will to-day, and am willing to leave the subject in his hands, to dispose of it as he sees fit. I am anxious to have God glorified in it, and wish to take no step, without God makes it plain to be my duty. I have felt truly grateful of late, that I had a God to whom I could go, and commit my case,—and one who feels for me, and will direct me in such way as will best promote his kingdom. Enjoyed something of a spirit of prayer to-day. 'Tis to me an eventful time. I close my twenty-first year with this day. How uncertain whether I see another birth-day in this world; before 1836 my body may be in the cold grave, and my spirit *where?*"

Note to a sister in the church, after receiving a similar proposal:—

"*Providence*, ————————
Wednesday afternoon.

MY DEAR ——,—I am induced to write you a note, for I feel this afternoon so deeply the need of your sympathy and your prayers. Believe me, I am unhappy—and why? It is on account of receiving *another letter*, over which I *wept* and *prayed*, and *prayed* and *wept*. Now I am perplexed, what course to pursue I am quite doubtful. I need your advice. I cannot go to meeting this evening, and if you do not go, (I hope you will not,) will you pass the evening with me. We shall probably be alone, and I do wish to converse with you. Do not think me weak, for I feel relieved after expressing my feelings to any one in confidence. * * *

Yours affectionately, REBECCA."

"Wish, if married, to be a *pastor's* wife."

The four extracts next inserted refer to the efforts of an esteemed acquaintance to secure her affections:—

"Mr. —— proposes availing myself of the means of a familiar acquaintance with him; and wishes no farther encouragement, than the laying aside of all *pre-conceived* opinions, and making up my mind anew from what comes to my own observation. The proposition, I acknowledge, is a reasonable one. I have considered it, and finally concluded to consent to it. I have seen him often since that evening. Told him my religious sentiments were strictly *Congregational;* and I thought it very desirable for two *thus* connected to be of 'one heart, one mind, one belief,' etc. etc. I differed *materially* from him, in religious *views*, and I could not, consistently with the word of God, change my sentiments. Should such an union be formed, my *influence* must be exerted in behalf of a denomination which I conceived to be in error, or it would be of no use to him. He designs being a minister. The station then, which I should be called to fill, would be one of great importance, and one for which I consider myself entirely unqualified. It is an important station. A pastor's wife is one of no ordinary interest. My heart shrunk when I learned he contemplated standing on the walls of Zion to proclaim the gospel, and that he came to me to be a partaker of his joys and sorrows."

The following record was made some days after the above:—

"If there were one station that I *preferred* to occupy before another, (and I believe I did have a choice,) it was that of being the companion of a minister of the gospel; and not a minister merely in name, but one who should be *eminently devoted* to the great work of the Lord,—one who

"Cannot sacrifice principles."—Seeks advice.

should be a faithful shepherd, who would *love* souls, and glorify God in his labors. The reason of my making this choice was not that I thought I possessed qualifications requisite for such a station, (for I know not that I possess *one* such quality,) but I felt that being under the constant and immediate influence of a devoted minister I should be more devotedly *pious*, and *perhaps* I might promote the cause of Christ in such a station. Such a door is now opened before me. The hand of a Christian minister is offered me. Were he a *Congregational* minister, I admit the question would be a perplexing one. But he is a Baptist. I *cannot* sacrifice my *principles*. I hold them as sacred; I believe them to be founded on the word of God, and I cannot sacrifice them. I trust I am acting on principle. I trust God will show me how to act; I know he will." * * *

A subsequent minute is as follows:—

"Felt this morning as if it would be a relief to me, if I could freely converse with some one who would advise me, in reference to my peculiar case. Called on my friend ——, who has *proved to be a very dear friend.* Often have I been to him for counsel, and as often have I received it. He, as well as his wife, appeared gratified that I confided so much in him. I laid the case before him, in its proper light,—told him my feelings, etc. etc. He prayed with me very affectionately and solemnly. Felt relieved after this conversation. How precious is it to have kind, advising, faithful friends,—and I am convinced, that with my present feelings, I should do very wrong to offer the slightest encouragement to ——. I cannot affect, (nor do I wish to do it,) to be interested if I do not feel it. No—far from me—I am to act in this case wholly *unin-*

Refers the friend whose proposals she declines, to Christ.

fluenced. 'Tis true I have consulted my friends, some of whom advised one way and some the other. I shall *act* therefore as I see to be right. I think I am not premature in my decision. I believe I shall act according to the will of God, if I say to that friend who has so kindly given me a preference, that I *cannot* become the partner of his days."

A short time after she wrote :—

"This has been a day of peculiar feelings to me. —— called on me this afternoon. I have to-day given him a decided answer to his propositions. Endeavored to do it mildly, kindly, and affectionately, yet with decision. I thanked him for his past attention and good feeling towards me. It was a deeply trying moment. I knew his feelings. I knew how great would be his disappointment. * * * For a long time I could not speak of it. Finally a way was opened, and I improved it. I think I had strength from God in conversing with him. I gave no other reason (and indeed that was the chief I had,) than this, that I could not give him my heart, and I considered my personal happiness must be sacrificed should I accede to his proposals. He was much affected, 'unhappy and deeply tried,—felt that he had no friend to sympathize and feel for him.' I pointed him to Jesus, and advised him to look to Christ for help, and assured him that he was 'faithful who had promised,' and he was near, and would be his friend. *This* question, therefore, is now decided, after many weeks trial. It so perplexed my mind previous to my decision, that it materially affected my health,—so much that some of my friends feared it would prove an essential injury. I have wounded another's feelings, but could not avoid it. It not only affected my health, but my spiritual progress was impeded. But it is now *over*." * * *

One who is now beyond the reach of any injury to his feelings, by reference to this fact, once stated in substance to another and a mutual friend,—"The very rejection of his proposals was so Christian like, and evidently so much the result of her regard for the will of God, that while it increased his regret at her decision, it increased his reverence for deep piety like hers."

First acquaintance with Rev. Mr. Webster.

During a visit to relatives in Maine, the parents of Miss Russell were introduced to the preacher to whom they had listened on the Sabbath, as "the recently appointed Seamen's Chaplain at Cronstadt in Russia." As several of his children were interested in the seamen's cause in Providence, and being especially interested in it himself, as a retired sea-captain, her father invited the gentleman to pass through Providence on his way to New York, where business soon would call him, and aid their efforts by exciting deeper interest. This statement is to introduce the following extracts from her journal and letters:—

"Wednesday, Feb. 22, 1837. Attended the funeral of Mr. L. H. Arnold this afternoon. Thus one and another is called to leave this pilgrimage state, and enter upon the scenes of an eternal world. Happy the release where a soul goes prepared. * * * Rev. John C. Webster, who has been appointed Seamen's Chaplain to Cronstadt, and who sails soon for C., dined with us. He is a very agreeable man. We tried to urge him to remain in the city a few days, and address our citizens on the claims of seamen. He could not conveniently remain.

Saturday, April 8th. Rev. Mr. Webster arrived here this afternoon, and will pass the Sabbath with us. Had

family prayers. I cannot bear to think that the *altar erected this evening* must be *torn down* as soon as Mr. *Webster leaves.*

9th. Rev. Mr. Webster preached this morning for us." (Here follows a full abstract of his discourse, with remarks upon its influence.) * * * "This evening Mr. W. presented the claims of seamen, at Richmond-street church. He spoke about an hour with considerable interest.

Tuesday, 11th. This afternoon we held the quarterly meeting of the Bethel Society. Business conducted by gentlemen. Rev. Mr. Webster presided. Collection taken, amounting to $105.

Wednesday, 12th. Rev. Mr. W. left us this afternoon for Boston. * * * As he left the door he placed a letter very unexpectedly in my hand. I retired to my room, opened, and read its contents. I was thunderstruck. He asks *my hand.* Yes, he asks me to be a co-worker with him in the cause of Christ. I fell upon my knees and laid the case before my God. I felt so grateful that I had a God to whom I could go and unbosom my whole soul. I will trust him to guide me.

Thursday, 13th. Sleep departed from me last night; my soul was *troubled.* A question of vital importance agitated my bosom. I placed the letter this morning in the hands of my parents, (for to them I hope always to go for counsel.) I have been so tried to-day that I am sick to-night. * * * I am perplexed. Mr. W. asks me to accompany him to Russia, and be a co-worker with him in the vineyard of the Lord. To that I think I can never consent. My parents have a claim upon me that binds me here,—(particularly my own country,) and my health is inadequate. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, guide me I pray thee."

On his return from Boston, Mr. W. received the following:—

"*Providence, April* 15, 1837.

REV. MR. WEBSTER,—I have made several attempts yesterday and to-day to answer the communication placed in my hand on Wednesday, but have been unsuccessful, having felt too unwell to write in reference to that subject. Even *now* I do not feel able to write, and will therefore request an interview with you, if perfectly agreeable to yourself. The question, so *entirely unexpected*, has deeply agitated me. I have been peculiarly tried. I have passed sleepless nights and anxious days. I am *still tried*. I regard the subject of matrimony as one of vital importance, not *only* as affecting my own interests, but the interests of another, and the glory of God. It is one of the most *solemn questions* we can be called to decide, and consequently requires '*mature deliberation*,' and *much prayer*—for to God we should go for direction. I trust the apology I offer for not *answering* your letter will be acceptable. I *certainly would* do it did I feel able.

I am, with much respect, your friend,

REBECCA."

"Saturday, 15th. * * * Had an interview with Mr. W. this evening of several hours. I stated my objections, which are, leaving my country for *far distant Russia*, (4,500 miles,) though the voyage is usually performed in forty or fifty days. I stated to him my feelings, my conflicts with my own heart, (which I fear is unwilling to obey even if God calls me to go,) and the severe trial of separating from my parents, brothers, sisters, friends. He feels that the circumstances through which we have be-

come acquainted are *providential*, and that the agency of God directed his steps here to my father's house, and gave rise to his present feelings. The interview was trying. I could give him no decisive answer. Mr. W. prayed with me upon the subject. May God *hear* and *answer* prayer, and direct me to a right decision. I wish to act in accordance with his will, and in whatever situation I am placed, to glorify him in my body and spirit, which are his."

"April 16th. * * * I have *reflected*, *prayed*, *decided*, and have engaged myself, this evening, provided my parents consent, to become the companion of God's ministering servant, Rev. J. C. W. He leaves America very soon for Russia, to remain till autumn, when he will visit his native country, and remain till spring. * * * I pray God to grant his blessing to descend upon each of us, and if it is *his will*, may we eventually be united in marriage, and be a *faithful pair* in the Lord's vineyard. I feel very inadequate to become the wife of a minister of the gospel, and fear I can never answer the expectations of Mr. W.; but God can fit me for any station which he desires me to fill, and to him I will go for direction, and for a prepared heart. I earnestly desire to be a faithful Christian and labor for God.

Monday, 17th. Mr. W. conversed with my parents last evening, and has obtained their consent to an engagement between us. He left us this afternoon for Hampton, N. H., and will return here before he leaves the country. May prosperity and the blessing of God attend him."

Advised to "be respectful," and begin letters with "Rev. Mr. W.—Sir."

Letter to Mr. Webster.

"*Providence, April* 19, 1837.
Wednesday evening.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Had I been told, *ten* days since, that at *this time* I should be penning a letter to you as my *particular friend*—the friend to whom I had *pledged* my hand in the sacred bonds of conjugal affection, I should have *flatly* contradicted the assertion—so *unexpected*, so unlooked for. But we cannot always know the designs of our Heavenly Father concerning us. When I *contemplate* the peculiar circumstances which made *us* acquainted, I can regard them in no other light than *providential*, and I trust God, who has (I hope) thus far guided us, will continue to guide us, and be to us a never-failing friend, the source of all wisdom.

Your kind letter I was delighted to receive; papa brought it from the office this afternoon as he came up to tea. Do you imagine I *blushed* at all when handed me? Yes, a *little*, for I could not avoid it. I *know* you will wish to hear from me soon, and have therefore withdrawn from the family to address you. Presume you are *now* at Hampton, seated by your affectionate mother, and perhaps your brothers. Hope your mother is recovering. * * * * Miss.—— says, 'Do tell me, Rebecca, how you are going to *commence* your letter, by what address? Remember Mr. W. is a *minister*, and do be respectful. I think you ought to commence, "Rev. Mr. W.—Sir."' * * * * Mamma says she thinks I *appear* 'very happy, and she hopes I *am* so.' She remarks that 'by and by you will see other ladies that will be so much more *interesting*, and make so much better companions for you, that you will not care for me.' * * * I *rather doubt* if you lose your

Regret at Mr. W.'s departure for Russia lost in view of duty.

affection so easily. I have too much confidence in you to believe such things. * * * My feelings coincide with yours in regard to our 'intercourse and correspondence,' that it should be 'characterized by the most unfeigned, confiding, and faithful love.' In your lonely hours, when you may sometimes wish for the presence of your friend, do not for one moment doubt the *affection* of *your Rebecca.*"

"*April* 25.

MY DEAR CALVIN,—I have chosen the address I use because I believed it to be most agreeable to you, and because I think it perfectly proper. I do think 'dear friend' rather 'too formal,' although I considered it most appropriate for my last. * * * Saturday came, and no letter,—Monday, the same,—and to-day the long wished for letter arrived. I have read it over and over until I verily believe I could repeat its contents. How often when you are far away shall I read it and others over and over again, imagining them to be new, for seldom can I then hear from you. Oh, I cannot endure the thoughts of a separation, but I must hush. That is complaining against Providence, and though I know you *must* go, that God *calls* you, or rather *bids* you go, I cannot but wish you could remain at home. * * * I am truly glad to have you go in the Independence. * * * The account of your labors on the Sabbath pained me. I can hardly imagine how you could perform so much labor in one day. I think it *too much*, and hope you will not attempt it again. But you will not have the opportunity will you, for next Sabbath you will be here, and I shall be so careful of you that I shall not let it be known that you are coming, and consequently let no arrangements be made for your

"Ministers often injudicious in selecting a companion."

preaching. You must hear *our* minister next Sabbath, and perhaps you can hear Dr. Wayland. * * * I want to see you every moment you can spare me. If nothing but the miniature keeps you away, I think that can be done very soon. I am rejoiced to hear you are having it taken. I hope it will be a perfect likeness since the original cannot be here. * * * You would certainly have smiled last evening, had you been here. A friend came in to pass the evening. The conversation soon turned on the requisite qualifications for a minister's wife. I observed that my friend had raised the standard very high. She expected much, very much, of such a lady. I freely gave my opinion, (in the presence of my parents too,) and was not disposed to have a lower standard than her own. We discussed the question a long time, and I finally remarked that I thought ministers very *injudicious usually in their selections*. Don't you think so? I have never seen many that I thought qualified to fill so important a station, and 'I am less than the least of all.' * * I am obliged to you for your kind advice about my health, and intend to follow it *implicitly*. I don't know about the morning walk. I am rather too lazy to walk in the morning, though it is the best time, I think, to stroll about for one's health. * * Our meetings of conference continued till Friday of last week. The attendance was good, and considerable interest was felt in them— * * —though I confess I was not in a good frame of mind to enjoy preaching last week. My thoughts wandered to *Boston* and *Hampton*. I hope I shall not forget God. Pray for me, that I be not led to depart from God, and love the creature more than the Creator. These things are calculated to draw off our affections from God for a time. * * * I thought of you a great deal last Sabbath. It seems you

Relief, in commending her absent friend to God.

went in the evening without having any thing to say, but somehow managed to *talk* an hour on 'righteousness, temperance,' etc. I hope many 'trembled,' as you reasoned on those subjects, but that *none* said, 'Go thy way for this time.' I hope that your 'last effort' will produce mighty effect in Hampton, and that many will be your 'crown of rejoicing.' It will doubtless produce effect, for it was *doubtless* accompanied with much prayer, and 'prayer moves the hand that moves the world.' As a minister of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, may you be eminently holy. May you *reflect* the image *Christ* has imparted to you, on this world. I hope you will ever be a disciple whom Jesus loves. Like the disciple whose name you bear, may you be permitted to lean on Jesus' bosom, and follow him whithersoever he goes. * * *

I am your devoted, REBECCA."

"*May 6th.*

* * * I repaired immediately to my room after your departure. My heart bled, and I was glad I was permitted to weep. As soon as I could sufficiently recover myself, I commended you to our Heavenly Father. I felt that he was *our* Father, and that he was interested in *us*. * * A thought has suggested itself to my mind since you left, which I will express to you. It is this, that we *have a daily concert of prayer for each other*. Suppose we observe some part of the hour between eight and nine in the morning. I mentioned that hour because I thought it would be as convenient as any. I doubt not you will approve the suggestion. We need each other's prayers, and it will be delightful indeed to know that at the same hour our petitions are ascending to God for each other. I will observe that hour, and am confident you will. * *

Urges Mr. W. to do good, while waiting for fair wind.

We ought to be grateful to God for *permitting* us to love each other as we do. I hope he will not separate us because we love each other so *much*. Let us love him more, and so live, and act, that he may not deem it *necessary* to call us from time into eternity. Pray for me very earnestly, that I may be sanctified, and be able to glorify God."

"*May 13th.*

I *dare* not *influence* you at all now. God will direct. Follow *his direction*. * * We ought to notice and remember every new reason for loving God. I want to love *him a great deal more*. * * I feel that I have been deficient in closet duties of late. It is true I have always observed my stated seasons of prayer, and endeavored to be punctual, but I have been very superficial, and I fear have not offered 'the effectual fervent prayer' of which the apostle speaks, 'which availeth much.' It is my purpose to *work* for God this summer. I am anxious to do much for him, to let my light shine in many of our dark places. How is it with you, ——? Have you the love of Jesus burning in your soul? Are you now doing all you can for Jesus? I have been thinking, perhaps God has work for you to do in Boston, and for this reason is delaying your departure. Embrace every opportunity you have to work for him. Remember 'opportunities to do good create obligation to do it.' If no opportunities offer, seek them, and let this visit of yours in Boston be remembered throughout eternity. In meeting the impenitent, be careful to warn him of his danger, and let no sinner with whom you meet go down to death unwarned. I need constant warning to be faithful, and trust you will ever be faithful when you write me. Point out all my sins which

Wandering thoughts in prayer.—"Wish for a rail-road to Russia."

you can discern. Be careful of —— Calvin, and not let him preach more than twice on the Sabbath. I think that is as much as he is able to preach. Read often the 121st Psalm."

"*May* 19.

We have another stormy day, but I think the wind is getting round, and that tomorrow it will be favorable; but we will not be anxious, the hand of Providence hath ordered it, and it is right. * * Is not this a good time to be cultivating personal piety? You *cannot* now be wholly engrossed in worldly business, and must have more leisure to attend to the cultivation of the heart. Do you ever find in yourself a disinclination to attend to devotional exercises? I confess I often do. I frequently attend to them because Christ enjoins it, not because I love it. * * Are you ever troubled with wandering thoughts when you pray? I find great difficulty in fixing my thoughts on God when I pray. * * How peculiarly I need the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. * * We may now influence some sinners to turn to God, who may before the year closes be beyond the reach of our influence. Our opportunities for usefulness may be greater now than hereafter. At any rate it is our sacred duty to live every day for God, and *so* let our light shine. * * I hope *we* shall glorify our God. 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' * * I am thankful for these mails, and rail-roads. I should like to have a rail-road from Providence to Cronstadt."

The following is an extract from a letter which met Mr. W. at his return from Cronstadt, after seven months' absence, during which many letters were lost on their way.

Those which have been preserved are much obscured by interlining. It has not been deemed expedient to attempt to transcribe them, as those written previously and subsequently, develope fully her views and feelings during that time:—

"*Providence, Dec.* 22, 1837.

I am sure it will rejoice your heart, on your arrival in New York, to find a letter anxiously awaiting your return, from your own Rebecca, assuring you of her *continued love*, and *perfect health*. I knew you would be glad to hear from me, even though you would be only a *day* from me. Oh, this suspense! Could you look into my heart, you would see *anxiety* and *distress*. The question, *where is my Calvin?* is constantly in my thoughts. Does he *live*, or has he long since been consigned to a watery grave? Am I writing to the *living*, or the *dead?* Painful, oh painful, inexpressibly so, are the emotions of my soul. Did I know you were alive and well—that you were near your home, I should be temporarily relieved; but I know nothing, and while I write my heart bleeds. If alive, perhaps you are sick, and have no kind hand to minister to your wants. But I ought not to anticipate evil and sorrow. 'The Lord reigneth.' I have been *patient*, and been willing to leave you in the hands of God, trusting in him, and believing he would return you in *his own* time—which would be the right time, and therefore the *best*."

"*Jan.* 26, 1838.

I called on Mrs. A. again yesterday morning. I am quite in love with her. I don't wonder Mr. A. married her. I think she is very fascinating. She met me very affectionately; wished me to stay all day with her; and I

should like to have done so, but could not. She is certainly very lovely, and possesses a sweet, Christian spirit. She is what a *minister's wife* should be. She came into our female prayer-meeting, and united her prayers with ours. I seldom have heard a more humble, spiritual, fervent prayer breathed forth. She prayed as if there were no one present but Him to whom she addressed herself. The interview was a melting one. The Saviour met us, and it 'was good to be there.'

I feel quite solicitous to hear what is the result of your inquiries at Boston and Andover, and to know your present feelings about our future home. My feelings remain as they were when I last wrote. I wish our Heavenly Father to decide for us, and then we shall be happy, and know we are in the path of duty. Where 'duty leads, we will go.' I hope, dearest, you are living for God, and letting your light shine. Never let there be a doubt in the mind of a single individual, my dear, that you are a minister of the gospel. Many eyes are upon you, who are ever watching every step and motion, and ready to detect the slightest omission of duty, and commission of sin. They remember that 'the tree is known by its fruits.' Be faithful to the impenitent, and also to the Christian. 'Let the love of Christ be in you and abound.'"

"*Jan. 28th.*

This afternoon I am going to the meeting to sew for the sailors. I shall be very happy to aid in *any way* in doing *them* good,—even to go to Russia, if GOD calls me thither. I think I feel willing and anxious to go where the Lord would send me. But here is the question. Is it *God* who calls, or is it *man?* If merely *man*, then I should *waver;* but if I am conscious it is the voice of God, I trust

"Dares not advise respecting Mr. W.'s remaining chaplain."

that, as a *child* of *his*, I should say I will go *cheerfully*. In your decision, let not anything I have said of a discouraging nature weigh with you. I dare not assume the responsibility of even helping you decide. I am willing to leave it with our covenant God. We must pray a great deal in view of the decision, and *God will direct*. 'Commit thy way unto him, and he shall direct thy path.' Precious promise. Are you not glad you have a God, to whom you can go for direction? Oh, I would not renounce my hope in him, for worlds; and yet I am astonished that I love him so little, and do so little to promote his cause. I must return to him, with all my heart, and while I live glorify him."

"*March* 17*th*.

I had some interesting conversation with Mrs. A. on various topics. She gave me some matrimonial advice, which I trust I shall find useful. She is decidedly in favor of ministers marrying; thinks it is 'not good for man to be alone.' She thinks my *happiness will*, and my *usefulness ought* to be greatly augmented by the union. * * I trust it will be so.

I thought much of you on Thursday, it being the anniversary of one of the most important eras of your life. I looked back one year, and saw you in Newburyport, (in imagination;) heard that solemn discourse of your now sainted father,—and my heart was touched by his address to his son; heard the solemn charge delivered to you as a minister of the Lord Jesus; the solemn ordination prayer; witnessed the imposition of hands, and the presentation of the right hand of fellowship,—and I could scarcely believe but that it was all reality. It *was* reality truly, but I was not there to witness it. I can only picture it in my own

Views of her uncle Gair, (one of the firm of Baring, Brothers, & Co) of Liverpool.

imagination, and regret that I could not have been an eye-witness. Was the first anniversary of that interesting and solemn day a precious one to you? Did you not consecrate yourself anew to the Saviour, and make many new resolutions for the future? I trust you did; and that God will assist you in discharging your duties, and make you an eminently holy minister of the everlasting covenant."

"*March* 23*d*.

You will be glad to hear that I have, at last, commenced my systematic course of living, of which I have so often talked. I commenced on Tuesday; have followed it pretty closely; and have accomplished far more this week than for a long time past. I hope to continue it without interruption. * * *

Called yesterday on Mrs. J. She welcomed me again to her house. Said she had heard there was a probability of my going to Russia; and she spoke of her regret, at parting with me, very affectionately, and with tears. * *

I was not sorry to hear Mr. L.'s opinion of your return to Russia. It is indeed good to have the counsel of Christian friends.

Mother has just received a letter from uncle Gair. He remarks that he 'presumes Rebecca is married, or about to be. He does not exactly understand R.'s *plans*, but he hopes she is not going abroad on a *mission*, particularly to Cronstadt. He knows too much of the place, and the character of the seamen visiting there, to deem it a fit place for a young lady of the United States to be located.' He thinks 'New England would be far preferable.' Thus much for his opinion. I cannot recollect what else he says, for I have only carelessly read over his letter once. I rather think events will favor our settling in our own happy

Painfulness of suspense.—Ventures *now* to *advise* Mr. W.

New England. If so I shall be far from being unhappy in consequence. I hope the Lord will direct. I have had much freedom of late in commending the case to our covenant God. You ask 'if I have enjoyed more intimate communion with God, since temptations have been removed?' I think I have; and have made new resolves to honor God. I have had some sweet seasons since the Sabbath."

"*March* 29*th*.

I have been thinking recently, how pleasant it will be for us, when we are settled over some destitute flock, where we may assist, in some humble manner, in cultivating the vineyard of our Lord. I look forward to such a day with deep interest and much pleasure. I can work for him *now*, in many ways, I am well aware; but *then*, I think I can work more effectually. I hope some village in our own happy New England will be better for *our* having lived in it. *You* as their pastor, and I as your helpmeet. Does not this seem rather like a predilection in me for New England? Perhaps you say yes. I ask then, do not your own feelings, on the whole, under all circumstances, coincide with what I have expressed. This state of suspense, my dear, is not very agreeable, is it? Now I think I will venture to advise, as well as *express* an opinion, as I have above. I would wait no longer for the decision of any one. All with whom you have consulted, have advised your relinquishing the idea of a return to Russia, or if not advised thus, have said nothing to encourage your returning there. I would decide myself, were I in your place, *not to go*, under all circumstances; but would seek a parish in New England, and there bring all your energies to bend in the one great object, so dear to yours and to the Saviour's heart."

His delay in complying.—A new form of attack by Satan.

Mr. Webster did not feel it to be his duty at once to comply with these suggestions. It was *his wish*, and he was *pledged* to return to Cronstadt, unless the British and Foreign Sailor's Society of London, should occupy that station by an English chaplain. Yet he was embarrassed by the fact, that physicians had expressed the fear that she would not endure the malaria which enfeebles the constitution of foreign ladies at St. Petersburg. He was in suspense as to duty,—and while in that painful state of mind, was astonished to receive the following letters. They are inserted as they were written, as many others are, to enable the reader to judge of her character, by seeing simple truth. There is also another inducement to introduce these letters, viz:—the influence which they *may* exert. She distinctly ascribed the vascillation of her affection to the influence of Satan. As already suggested, how often does *love* become a temptation to forget God, even with the most godly! But Miss Russell had withstood this temptation, and still retained her attachment to her Redeemer,—increased rather than diminished by her growing affection for her chosen companion. Another form of attack is therefore chosen. She is to be tempted to break her plighted faith, under false views of duty. And did Satan hope, by this shock, to cause her and her intended companion to neglect their Saviour, while thus agitated and distressed? Matrimonial engagements are, in fact, as Miss Russell ever afterwards regarded them, 'very sacred and solemn.' When broken by professed Christians, great scandal is sure to follow, to the injury of the church, and of souls without its pale. Yet many such occurrences are constantly transpiring. The only fear seemingly attached to such faithlessness is often merely that of a 'legal suit for damages,' from which, however, the pride or principle

of the suffering party is generally a sufficient protection. It is lamentably true that multitudes yield to the tempter in this respect, and thus from some slight or imagined reason, inflict misery upon themselves, and woe upon others who feel their influence. It is believed that this recklessness to the consequences, and disregard to the sacredness of such a pledge, is too often met with, and far too often goes unrebuked, in candidates for the sacred office. Did Satan design to inflict such a wound on the cause of Christ, in selecting *her*, so well known as an active Christian, for the victim of his suggestions? Her engagement was *public*, in a degree; *unavoidably* so. Mr. W. was a public messenger of the churches to the seamen of Cronstadt. Such a course in their case, under any circumstances, would have been known publicly, and must have done great injury to themselves and to the cause of Christ. But the foe of their souls was foiled. She nobly resisted, and in the safe way, by *appealing* to God, her *constant refuge*. May the dark picture of the wiles of the destroyer here presented, prove both a warning and guide to others who are tempted like her to make light of plighted affection.

The following was the first intimation of any kind which she had ever given of a change in her feelings:—

"*Providence*, *April* 30, 1838.

MY DEAR FRIEND;—With kindness and affection—with a sincere desire to avoid causing unnecessary pain—with a strong and earnest wish to promote your happiness both in time and in eternity—with feelings keenly sensible of all the solemn considerations connected with, and likely to result from the important step which duty requires me to take—and from a sense of duty to you, to myself, to my friends, and to my God,—I am constrained to say, that I

Wish to be released from her pledge of affection.—Avowed reasons for this wish.

can no longer look upon you as the one who is to be my partner in all the 'weal or woe,' which it may be my lot to experience while life to me is given. It is due to you, as well as to myself, that at least some of the reasons and motives which have moved and prompted to this step should be given to you; and to this end, allow me to state my solemn conviction, that with views and feelings so dissimilar as ours are on many subjects, and points, we could not be happy in the consummation of our proposed union. The circumstances under which the engagement took place are doubtless well remembered by you; and your then expected early departure from the country, obtained from me the consent to be yours, which under other circumstances would not have been given upon so short an acquaintance as was ours at that time. I need not say, that at the time referred to, although the acquaintance was of a recent date, my feelings towards you were such as a lady should feel for the one who is to be her companion for life; nor is it necessary for me to state what were my feelings, when after a long absence from your native land, I was permitted to welcome your return. A longer acquaintance,—an opportunity afforded me under somewhat delicate circumstances of seeing you, has resulted in the conviction that we could not be happy together.

The last three weeks have been the most unhappy of my life. Perhaps you have sometimes discovered my sadness. I think you have,—and I think too you have anxiously inquired the cause. I could not give it. I hoped a change would take place, and I tried to overcome such feelings. With the exception of two or three days during that time, I have been able to wear a *cheerful countenance*, but I have had an *aching heart*. When I saw that your feelings towards me were *unchanged*, I could not tell you that *mine*

Purest friendship retained.—Whole matter left freely to her.

were *changed*. I once or twice resolved to do it before you left, but I could not summon my energies to the painful task.

I have not been hasty in my decision. The subject has been considered in all its bearings. I have earnestly sought, and I trust obtained divine direction. Too well do you know the tenderness of my heart, to doubt for a moment that I am grieved to give you pain; my heart has bled in view of it, and has found relief only in tears and in prayer.

For reasons which should be obvious to you, I have to request that all my letters—this of course with the rest—be returned to me, and that you retain no copies of any of them. I will return yours if requested. It is with feelings of the *purest friendship* that I have now written. I shall ever feel interested in your welfare, and shall ever pray that you may be happy both here and hereafter,—but henceforth shall regard you only as a *friend*. The things belonging to you which now remain at our house, shall be forwarded to you, wherever you may direct them to be sent. I have just received yours of the 27th, and will forward the things that you requested by the earliest opportunity."

Justice to another here demands the statement, that with renewed assurance of his affection, "the whole matter was left for her prayerful decision, upon *her own views* of duty to him and to God."

A further explanation of the state of her mind, is given in her second letter respecting it:—

"*Providence, May* 4, 1838.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—In compliance with your request, and agreeably to my own wishes, I again address you.

Advice of her parents.—Mr. W. had "done nothing" to cause the change.

Yours of the 2d was received yesterday afternoon. I was not surprised that you wished me to write again. I expected you would,—and I am very willing to do so. If aught that I can do, can serve to heal, in any degree, the wound I have myself inflicted, most willingly will I do it. I was conscious that my last,—so unlike the nature of the one you were then expecting to receive,—would produce a painful shock. It was exceedingly painful to *me* to *communicate* such intelligence, and I doubted not that it would be to *you* to *receive* it. Many wretched hours, yes days did I experience before I could bring my mind to the task of telling you what were my feelings in relation to our anticipated union. I felt that duty required it, but my own personal feelings would not permit me to do it. I am wretched in view of the pain I have caused you. It has occasioned me more pain, and more tears, than any act of my life. It seems too cruel, thus to requite such love as yours. But what could I do? With a sorrowful heart, I went to my parents, for counsel. They were as much surprised probably as yourself. They advised me just as they had done on a previous occasion,—the time of our engagement,—simply this: 'Do just as you think you ought to do; we cannot *advise;* 'tis a question of *personal* duty, a solemn and an important one; and you alone are able to judge what is your duty.' To whom else could I go? God was my only refuge. To him I 'committed my way,' remembering his promise to all such—that 'he will direct thy path.'

You ask, evidently with an anxious heart, 'What have I *done?* My dear brother, let me assure you, that you have *done nothing.* You have ever loved me, far, far more than I deserved. I have always felt unworthy of your affection, and never have I 'had occasion to doubt the

"Cannot *write*."—Wishes a personal interview.

strength or sincerity of your love;' nor could I 'think you unfaithful' to her to whom you had pledged your heart. And I have loved you too,—yes, your warmest, fondest love was fully reciprocated; but my feelings within a few weeks have been changed—not that I loved another—no, far from me be such a thought—think me not so base. I cannot tell you *what* has changed them. I can only say, that I felt that your love was not reciprocated. You will understand me,—I had no unkind feeling—*no not one;* but I was not sensible of that degree of love which I felt that I ought to possess to become your wife, and I was constrained to tell you so. I felt that our views and feelings were not congenial. I have sometimes thought, and said too, that there was some similarity between us; but in many things we are dissimilar,—perhaps, however, not more so than multitudes of persons thus connected, who are nevertheless very happy in the connection. The opportunity which has been afforded me, of becoming more familiarly acquainted with you, has led me to observe very closely the different traits in your character, and the *little things combined*,—for you know small things make up the character of an individual,—led me to feel that our characters and feelings were not sufficiently congenial to warrant our happiness in the marriage relation. *Much* doubtless is to be attributed to our different education,—perhaps *more* than I then realized.

What more shall I say? I have written two pages and have as yet arrived at no point. I know not what to *write*. Could I *see* you, I would freely and frankly tell you the whole, and you could then judge whether I was actuated by right feelings; whether the result of my deliberations were wise or unwise. I cannot *write* as I wish, or as I should *talk*.

Return of her attachment.—"Say not Rebecca is fickle."

And now, in closing, allow me to express my thanks for the many kindnesses I have received at your hands, and to ask forgiveness if I have ever grieved you. And commending you to the care of our Heavenly Father, with the earnest, heartfelt prayer that his right hand may guide you and his rich blessing attend you, both in time and eternity, permit me to subscribe myself,

Your sincere friend and sister in Christ,

R. G. RUSSELL."

The conclusion of this singular developement of feeling is seen in the following, which ascribes it to the machinations of Satan:—

"*Providence, May* 8, 1838.

MY DEAR,—What appellation shall I use? May I not say Calvin? * *

It is a painful pleasure to address you after what has passed. I could not do it, were I not assured that you 'love me still and as fervently as ever,' for I feel that I have forfeited all claim to your love. In your case I have seen verified that text, 'Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it.' * *

Oh say not now 'Rebecca is fickle; she knows not what she does, or who she loves; tomorrow she will send me a letter which may rend my heart. She will change her mind again, no doubt.' Oh say not so. I could not bear it from *you*. * * Oh let not this act of my life be the criterion by which you judge of my character. Oh that it could be recalled. * * But 'tis done, and I have done it. * * I thought I was obeying the voice of God; that I was acting in accordance with the dictates of his spirit. I *knew* not *but* I was, for I often find it difficult to know whether 'tis the voice of God or not, which I hear. * *

"Arch adversary" source of "terrible letter."—A playful sally.

It was at the instigation of the arch adversary of souls that I penned that '*terrible letter.*' I did not think so then, else I would have foiled him. I would rather have aimed the '*deadly dart*' at *him* than at *you.* You know it is his favorite business to 'go about seeking whom he may devour,' and he well knew the ardor of our affection, and came to me with such suggestions as were calculated to alienate my affections. * * I trust it will all eventually work for good, to both you and myself. I pray that it may; that we may both be led to Jesus, and that we may advance more and more in the knowledge of the Lord. How much do we need trials. They usually tend to our spiritual improvement. I say *our*, I mean *my own.* I trust God will sanctify this to us, and that we may be more holy,—that it may please him to overrule this for his own glory." * *

The perfect restoration of her attachment is shown perhaps most vividly in the following playful sally, extracted from a letter of May 20th:—

* * "A *gentleman*, a dear friend of mine, called here this morning to know if I would like to *ride;* if so, he would be happy to take me out, and enjoy this fine day, and would call at eight o'clock. I consented to go, and we rode more than *three hours.* Had a very fine ride. Now are you troubled, dear, and think I am coquetish? Oh, no, I think not. Would you like to know the name of my beau? I'll tell you, one of these days, when I see you. You be guessing, will you? I suppose you have guessed, by this time, 'brother Charles,'—well then you are right." * *

Explanation of her course, in letter to her brother.

That she assumed to herself the whole responsibility in this matter, and felt her course to have been unwarranted, is seen in the following extract from a letter to her brother, then at New York, dated May 20th:—

"You probably knew that my engagement to Mr. Webster was suspended a few weeks since. It is now resumed. It was on account of a misunderstanding on my part, which led to a personal interview, at which all was explained, and I found that the change in my feelings was entirely without foundation. Let me ask you to meet him hereafter as the dear friend of your affectionate sister,

REBECCA."

In after life she always spoke of that "interlude" as "the work of Satan;" as "most painful experience," and never willingly conversed respecting it. She regarded "breaches of promise in Christians" as "great offences;" as a "deep injury to religion." Her advice to others afterwards was, "Engagements should be cautiously, prayerfully made," and "then regarded as sacred." This experience deepened that conviction.

After the painful shock to the reader's mind which has been felt over the preceding "severe trial," the uninterrupted developement of Christian affection which follows will probably assume additional interest:—

To Mr. Webster.—May 28th.

"I am glad you are happy; that you are well too,—both in body and soul. '*Keep* thy *heart* with all diligence.' After all, it is of little consequence about these caskets, if we only take *good care* of the *gem*. I would by no means think it right, however, to *neglect* the casket; it should be kept in sufficiently good order not to injure the gem. * *

"Agitating questions prevent unanimity in churches."

In consequence of party spirit and agitating questions, hardly a church can give a call to a minister any where near *unanimous*. This is certainly to be regretted very much. Our church, I have no doubt, would settle Mr. O. unanimously, were it not for the abolition question. He is an abolitionist, though not a '*fiery one*,' and I presume it will be long before we find a man in *all things perfect*." * *

To Mrs. J. W.—June 11th.

"You kindly inquire after ——. He is now in Pittsfield, Mass., supplying the pulpit of a minister who is quite unwell, and wished to leave for a little time. I heard from him on Saturday; he was not able to write any thing very definite. Two or three destitute parishes were in pursuit of a minister in that region. But where the Lord would have him labor, is yet unknown. He is God's servant, and is ready to obey him, in going where he shall open a door of usefulness to him. He is anxious to have something definite in view. You know his feelings and you know mine. Neither of us would be impatient, but would desire to trust in God, remembering his promise, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he shall direct thy path.' I think we ought to exercise *patience*. It is only a few weeks since the question of a return to Russia was decided. You are aware, I presume, it was a negative decision, and consequently the time is not very long since Mr. W. has been ready to settle. He could not consistently preach any where as a candidate while that case was pending,—though for a few weeks prior, he was quite decided not to return. The case was left entirely to him. They wished his return. For several serious reasons, it seemed necessary to him to have an English chaplain in lieu of an American."

Meets a sailor who heard Mr. W. preach in Russia.

To her parents then visiting Canada.—July 9th.

"I called at the 'Seamen's Home' Saturday. While there a sailor came in and asked for 'brandy.' There was only a child in the store, and I had a long talk with him. It was very interesting to me. He had just arrived from the East Indies into Norfolk, and had come directly here, and was at 'Lafaye's boarding-house.' He said he had been at Hamburg, St. Petersburg, Cronstadt, etc. I inquired who he heard preach at Cronstadt? He replied Mr. Webster. I should like to tell you all the conversation I had with him, but my limits will not permit."

The following letter is here introduced to show that her attention was still directed as fully as ever to doing good. It was accompanied with 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted,' and exhibits the manner in which numbers of similar presents were introduced to the notice of her young friends at this time:—

"*Providence, July* 17, 1838.

MY DEAR EMMA,—It gives me pleasure to avail myself of the opportunity afforded by your mother's journey to N. to write you a few lines, which I have no doubt will be acceptable.

For news, I shall refer you to your mother, for it is not my object, had I time even, to communicate the passing events of the day. My business is of quite a different character, for it relates to the *immortal* part, instead of the *mortal*,—to the *soul* instead of the *body*. In the providence of God, you have been placed under my charge in the Sabbath-school,—and for what purpose? To fit you for a high station in society? Oh no; but for a higher and nobler purpose. To train you up for God; to place

"Not feeling sin adds injury to insult in abusing God's love."

before you your sins against your Maker; show you the aggravation and guilt of those sins, and point you to the only refuge of safety. You have incurred the displeasure of God, by a constant course of rebellion against him; you have abused his love; and now to complete the climax, you add insult to injury, by saying 'you don't *feel* your sins, and have no heart to repent of sin and turn to God.' Such excuses for the neglect of duty and commission of sin against God, will avail you nothing, dear Emma, when you stand at the bar of your offended Judge. Think you he will then say, 'Well Emma had not a sense of her sins, and therefore she is exonerated from guilt.' No, rather will he say, 'In that very *want* of *feeling lies* her *guilt*.' What kind of a heart can that be which is destitute of *feeling* in view of such *aggravated* sins? Surely it must be 'harder than the nether mill stone.' Let me affectionately inquire, 'if you lose your soul, on whom lies the blame?' Reflect upon that question solemnly before you reply, and answer it in view of the *judgment*. Remember God says, '*Whosoever will*, may come, and take of the waters of life freely.' The fault then is not God's. The Saviour says, 'Come unto me and I will give you rest.' The fault is not the Saviour's then. 'The Spirit and the bride say *come*.' The fault then is not the Holy Spirit's. *Whose then?* Emma, 'tis *yours* then, and *yours alone*. Are you willing to bear the blame of it; are you willing to suffer the penalty of having broken God's law? I know you are not. Then repent *now*, and turn to the Lord Jesus, and consecrate yourself forever to his service.

That you may be wise, and *live* and *act* for God, is the prayer of your affectionate Sabbath-school teacher.

R. G. RUSSELL.

P. S. Will you oblige me by accepting the book which

"God would not have Mr. W. settled in two parishes at once"

accompanies this. It is one which has been instrumental of saving many souls, and I have hope that if you read it *carefully* it will not be read in vain."

To Mr. Webster.—Sept. 22d.

"I thank you for receiving the suggestion in my last so kindly, and am glad you appreciate my feelings. I think we may be *helpmeets* to each other in various ways, and should ever be happy to make or receive suggestions which are designed for our mutual good.

You do indeed, dear, need divine direction in relation to your present situation. Now neither you nor I believe that God would have you go both to St. Johnsbury and Hopkinton; but he perhaps will have you go to *one* of the *two* places,—which of the two does *he* choose is the question then. I doubt not each has its preferences. But look well to the leadings of Providence. If God sees that you are *perfectly willing* and even anxious to obey his voice, and follow in his footsteps, he will without doubt mark out your path so plainly that you cannot err. It is indeed a very important question,—one that affects not only our own personal happiness and comfort, but the happiness and prosperity of the church over whom you may be placed,—and the prosperity of Christ's cause in the earth. In either place, you can doubtless be useful,—but in which the *most* useful is the question.

As it respects myself, I am willing to go where God calls. If he says Hopkinton, then I gladly go to Hopkinton. If he says St. Johnsbury, then I'll gladly go to St. Johnsbury. If I had a choice, I think I should not express it, for I wish you to act uninfluenced. Hopkinton may be a desirable situation on account of its nearness to

Boston and Providence, while it may be undesirable on account of the 'church not being *harmonious*.' It seems to me quite a difficult question to decide. I hope you may be guided *rightly*."

"*Sept. 28th.*

You are doubtless now at Hopkinton, where I hope Providence may eventually cast *our* lot. I am already prepossessed in favor of that place, and rather inclined to think we shall there find an abiding place. Your situation while there will be not a little trying. Every action, every motive, every look, and thought will be watched with a critic's eye. I know something of this, for we have had the same trial in our church. You will need much grace, dearest, during these few weeks, and I trust you will have it. Let me suggest a few things which are not new to you. Maintain your dignity as a Christian minister, preserving a medium between *too great* familiarity and *too much* reserve. Let the people see you are interested in their happiness as well as their spiritual good. Notice the *lambs* of the flock in your visits, and never fail to drop some word which the great head of the church will bless. Let the Sabbath-school share largely in your interest and your prayers. In the duties of the pulpit, let your sermons be short, always aiming at the conversion of souls. Be in a suitable frame of mind to present the solemn truths of God, that your people may see that you *feel* what you preach. *All* the exercises should be short, in order to interest and to profit. In short, ——, be a *holy man*, and live with a direct reference to the judgment. * * * Excuse me, ——, if I have assumed too much. I know I am not delivering the charge at your *installation*, but I am merely making suggestions as your dearest friend.

I hope God will bless your efforts at Hopkinton, and give you souls for your hire. * * * Let us both pray, and be willing to go where our Master calls us." * * *

"*Oct. 24th.*

The kind feelings you have expressed, and the earnest desire to testify the strength of your affections, deeply affected me. It humbles me to know that you love me so much, when *I so well* know my failings, my deficiencies, and my entire unworthiness to receive such marks of affection. Why, I cannot see *any thing* in my own character, or my person, to merit love; but if you can, it seems to me, you "see through a *glass* darkly"—*very darkly*. I am very happy to know you so freely and fully forgive all that is past. I hope most sincerely it may prove a blessing to both of our souls. I believe God often leads his children into deep waters, and into the very furnace of affliction; but if they are purified by reason of it, surely they should rejoice in their affliction, and 'count it *all joy*, if they may win Christ.' I often think I must be constantly afflicted in order to keep me near the Saviour,—for in the hour of trial we all flee to Christ as our refuge. What a precious refuge."

"*Nov. 7th.*

I hope we shall ever love each other sufficiently to *admonish* if need be, or at any rate to talk and write freely of our *spiritual* interests. I wish to have you faithful to me, and when I stray, to lead me back to the fold. How deficient Christians are, in laboring to promote each other's spiritual advancement. Truly we seem quite satisfied, if we have evidence that we shall finally be saved, without laboring constantly to lead sinners to Jesus, and to glorify

"Solemn to think of her influence over Mr. W."

God. Does not this state of mind evince supreme selfishness? I wonder we are permitted to live when we do comparatively nothing for our Master. I am daily more and more surprised at the goodness and long-suffering of God. Why we *ought* to esteem it a great privilege to labor for him.

When I think of your situation, as an ambassador of God, and look forward to the station I hope to occupy myself, I am led to inquire, with some emotion, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' What a responsible situation are you placed in.

> 'Tis not a cause of small import,
> The Pastor's care demands,
> But what might fill an angel's heart,
> It filled a Saviour's hands.'

I know I exert an influence over you; I cannot estimate the influence, but it is doubtless great,—and the thought is very solemn, that I must at the judgment render an account for the *kind* of influence."

"*Nov.* 16*th.*

These separations are melancholy, and I do not anticipate them with much pleasure. We have just passed through a trying scene. Sister L. left us on Wednesday, and the parting was very painful to all. We had long looked forward to it, and supposed we were prepared to let them go; but when the season came, all seemed anxious to hold them back. We then realized how very dear both of them were to us, and the fact of their going away to *live*, though under the most favorable circumstances, made all our hearts to bleed. They were going from the home of their childhood and youth, and not to look upon this any longer as their *home*. Oh that word *home*,—one around

S. S. pupils "wishing Mr. W. had never seen" their teacher.

which the fondest recollections cluster,—'tis too dear to be left with indifference. If *others* leave it thus, my brother and sister did not,—nor did *we* simply take their hand and coldly say farewell. No, every heart was full of grief and sadness, and every eye filled with tears; yes, each gave vent to the deep anguish of soul, and found relief in tears. What a resource! I knew I loved them both, but I did not know I loved them so much as I find I do. I cannot give you an idea of that parting scene. It reminded me forcibly of the time when I must bid farewell to *my* home, and find a home elsewhere,—but I will not talk of it now. * * * I doubt not God will make your path of duty plain. As far as my own feelings are concerned, I have not the slightest objection to going to H. Indeed I would be very happy to go there."

"*Dec. 27th.*

I have called on many of my friends lately, and *many* express regret, etc. at my leaving P. This is very kind surely. My class are really *unreconciled.* They tell me frankly 'they wish Mr. Webster never had seen me,'—'that it is a foolish business for Sabbath-school teachers to marry,' etc. and want me to 'give it up' even now. It is *amusing* indeed to hear them, and *gratifying* to witness their earnestness and their affection."

To Mrs. P.—Dec. 29th.

"Now, my dear friend, I flatter myself that you will be a little interested in my affairs, and with this presumption, I shall just tell you that, Providence permitting, I expect on the evening of new-year's day to enter upon a new relation—and quite an important one too,—no less than that of a wife. When I count the days, I find they are indeed

Description of her expected location.

few, and I almost tremble in view of the responsibilities which will devolve upon me, when that union is consummated. But he who 'tempers the wind to the shorn lamb' will I trust prepare me for my duties, and give me a heart to fulfil them as he shall direct.

I shall be situated not far distant from you. Mr. Webster has recently been installed as pastor of the Congregational church at Hopkinton, Mass. It is a pleasant place, about half way on the Boston and Worcester Rail-road. The towns of Framingham, Upton, and Holliston are adjoining Hopkinton. It is but thirty miles by stage from Providence, and very convenient of access. I am pleased with the prospect of being settled so near to my parents and friends. It is not much like going to *Russia*, and I feel no disposition to complain of the distance. I shall go there under many pleasant circumstances, and am happy and cheerful in view of it, though I am pained exceedingly to think of parting with my friends here, to whom I am much attached. I find there are many ties to be broken, and my heart bleeds in view of it. I shall leave home the next day after our marriage, for Boston and Hopkinton, and board this winter. I should prefer house-keeping, but *all things considered*, it seems more desirable to board till spring. I hope you and Mr. P. will be induced to visit H. But enough of *self*,—and now for others."

The following entry closes her journal of 1838:—

"Dec. 31. Quite a large number of my friends have been in to see me to-day; several of whom have very kindly presented me with tokens of remembrance. These things are certainly very grateful to one's feelings,—particularly in going from home.

And now I am spending my last evening before my marriage, with my friends. Tomorrow evening, God willing, the ceremony will be performed.

I feel that the past year has not been a very profitable one to me. I have not been profited enough by the one hundred and fifty-one sermons I have heard. And when I think of the means of grace I have enjoyed, I am surprised that I have done so little for the Lord Jesus. Letter writing is a great means of improvement, but I have not made it so, in the one hundred I have written,—nor have I derived as much as I ought by the eighty-two I have received. I pray God will make me more useful the coming year, and that at its close I may have, if my life is spared, a heart more devoted to his service. Farewell to 1838.

R. G. RUSSELL."

The first evening of 1839 was thus mentioned in her journal:—

"The evening passed off pleasantly. It was a *temperance* wedding. We offered our friends lemonade and cake, and many expressed their approbation of using lemonade instead of *wine*. I am, in consequence of this evening's exercises, commencing this year under peculiarly interesting circumstances. I now sustain the important and interesting relation of a wife, and am called to occupy the station of a clergyman's wife. I tremble when I duly consider the responsibility I am assuming. I feel my inability to discharge faithfully the duties, consequent upon such a station. But he who calls me to the work, will I trust, prepare me for it. I trust I enter not upon the marriage state unbidden. There are many things connected with my acquaintance with and engagement to C., which I re-

gard as indications of the will of God. We have been a year and eight months engaged, and both are happy in the consummation of this union.

We commenced praying together this evening, and shall attend to it mornings and evenings. I hope with profit to both.

This morning I very unexpectedly received a very valuable present from my beloved class in the Sabbath-school, of a beautifully bound book, containing 'Illustrations of Syria, the Holy Land, Asia Minor,' etc. with descriptions of the plates, by John Carne. It was accompanied with a very pretty note, which I shall peruse with great pleasure. Such a testimonial of affection from a Sabbath-school class, at such a time, is peculiarly gratifying; and although the volume itself possesses intrinsic worth, it is not to be named, compared with the kind feelings which prompted these dear young ladies to present it to me. I replied hastily to the note, to express my gratification and obligation to them."

"*Boston, Jan.* 3, 1839.

BELOVED PARENTS,—The emotions of my heart, on leaving you yesterday, can never be described. It was indeed like severing one's heart-strings to be separated from my very dear parents, brothers, and sisters. I knew it would be exceedingly painful, and consequently kept my mind busily employed up to the last hour of the time, that I might not be overwhelmed in view of the trial. These last few weeks have tried me, but by *effort* I have succeeded in keeping cheerful until the hour of our separation. Oh the agony of that hour! I could not easily endure a repetition of it.

Her gratitude for parental kindnesses.

Accept, my dearest parents, my acknowledgments of all your kindnesses to me, from the earliest period of my infancy to the present time. These have been neither *few* nor *small*. You have been to me all that fond affectionate parents could ever be to a child. I have not been insensible to the many indulgences granted me, nor can I be so ungrateful as to forget them. Few, very few, can boast of a kinder or more indulgent father and mother than myself. But how unfaithful a daughter have I been. I confess with penitence my guilt, and most earnestly desire your forgiveness. Whatever I have done which has grieved you and caused your hearts to bleed, forgive. What I have omitted to do, which would have been pleasing to you, forgive. In short, forgive and forget all I have done contrary to your wishes, and be assured of the sincerity and fervency of my love. * * *

Believe me, your very affectionate daughter,

REBECCA."

CHAPTER XIII.

COMMENCEMENT OF MARRIED LIFE.

"Sabbath, Jan. 6. The first Sabbath in this new year finds me at Hopkinton, which place the providence of God has marked out as the field of my present labors. Why he has sent me here is to me unknown; but I confidently believe he has *something* here for me to do. I have come

here to occupy the station of the wife of him, whom this people have chosen and installed as their pastor. And I feel most sensibly that I stand in great need of heavenly wisdom to direct me, that I may faithfully discharge the duties connected with my station. I know not that I shall *do much*, but this I know, that I earnestly desire to be a faithful, consistent, self-denying Christian, and a *helpmeet* indeed to him who is constituted the shepherd of this flock. That the eyes of this people will constantly be upon me, and that every act of my life is liable to be scrutinized I am not ignorant. I know much, very much, is expected of the wife of a minister, and I know too, that I am incompetent to fill the station with honor and faithfulness, but I rejoice in appropriating to myself the promise, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee.'

Friday, 11th. Called to see an old lady of the parish, the widow T. She is very ill with inflammatory rheumatism, and so affected by it that she is perfectly helpless—not able even to raise a finger. She is probably near death, and has no hope beyond this world. It was painful to see her. She appeared gratified to see us. C. prayed with her and exhorted her to make Christ her friend. I love to visit those who are afflicted. It seldom fails to do me good. It shows me my dependence, and gives me new cause for gratitude. This poor woman has been sick two years, and to-day her pain was so excruciating that she groaned constantly while we were there. She seems to be hastening to the judgment, *unprepared*.

Saturday, 12th. I begin to feel quite at home here, and am happy,—and I hope to live in such a manner, that God will not find it necessary to remove my blessings from me. I desire to realize my constant dependence on him, and to glorify him daily. C. has been engaged to-day in

preparing a sermon for tomorrow morning. I hope God will make use of it as an instrument, in awakening the consciences of many who may hear it. It is indeed solemn business to act as an ambassador for Christ,—to deliver his message to a dying people!"

"*Hopkinton, Jan.* 15, 1839.
Tuesday morning.

MY VERY DEAR PARENTS,—I love to sit down and address a letter to my beloved father and mother, who I am sure will be very glad to hear from me. It seems to shorten the distance between us, when we often hear from each other. Yours of the 10th was not received until yesterday, but I was exceedingly gratified to receive it then. I thank you for writing, and hope you will often favor me with a letter. Remember my situation is quite unlike yours. You have several of your family around you, and you are in *Providence*—dear spot. I am far from you all. I have come a stranger among strangers. I have here neither father, mother, brother, or sister, to whom I can go for counsel or advice. My husband is my *only dear friend*, and he is a *very dear friend*. He is a very kind and affectionate husband, and I assure you, dearest parents, we are very happy in each other. Think of me only as happy, for I am indeed so. Every thing around me conspires to make me so. The family with whom we board are exceedingly kind and obliging, and although not Christians, they entertain a high regard for religion, and religious persons. The acquaintances already formed are very pleasant, and the affection that is manifested by the people for my husband is extremely gratifying, and serves to render them dearer to me. We are both very kindly received and treated, and when I think of

"Tries to be sedate."—"Quaker faces."—"Dignity"

my unworthiness to be thus received, I can but wonder that the people are so blind as not to discover my faults so plainly, that they cannot love me. I see nothing in myself which merits such kindness as I have received.

We have received a great many calls. The people understand *etiquette* very well—much better than High-street church does,—for I candidly believe that Mr. and Mrs. F. have not received as many calls in Providence, as we have here already. We commenced yesterday to make calls. All appeared much gratified to see us, and we were urged at every house we called to take tea—but of course declined. The people are familiar and social, and make one feel perfectly at home among them. We visited at deacon ——'s last Thursday, as I told you we were going. It is about four and a half miles from here. We had a delightful evening to go out there. It seemed like spring. There were about a dozen of us together. The *deacons*, church *committee*, and *elder*—and each had his wife. I of course put on one of my quaker faces, and they all, I presume, thought I was a sedate old lady. They did not forget I was 'the parson's wife,' and were so *respectful* that I had to put on all the dignity of a lady of sixty years. I do not know how I shall succeed in maintaining *my dignity*, for it is quite new business. They like *familiarity*, connected with *proper* dignity, I perceive, and it is no easy matter to do exactly right. We had a very good visit at the deacon's, and were much pleased with his new wife.

We have had charming weather for the past week. To-day it is severely cold, but we are going out to try it. In a few minutes we are going to look at a house which has been offered us when it is vacated, which will be in April. The situation is very good, being near the church. It is next to Mr. W.'s, where you called. I hope we shall

like it well enough to engage it. This afternoon we shall spend in making calls, but shall probably ride. Tomorrow and next day shall see our friends here probably."

"Thursday, 17th. Attended the Ladies' prayer-meeting this afternoon at two o'clock, at Mrs. Joseph Walker's; thirteen present. Mr. Webster met with us to open the meeting by remarks and prayer. It seemed to produce a good impression. The meeting was one of great interest; there seemed to be a spirit of prayer among us. Six prayed. I enjoyed the meeting very much. It was the first I have attended, being the first they have held since I came here. I was gratified to see a readiness to pray, and the fervency of the prayers, particularly for their *pastor*, seemed very encouraging.

Saturday, 19th. This day my husband completes his twenty-ninth year. I hope he will consecrate himself anew to the work of the Lord, and so labor this year, that souls may be born again through his faithfulness. We have attended the prayer-meeting this evening at the vestry. There were few present, but the spirit of the Lord seemed to be there. I think there are some Christians here who are praying for the descent of the Spirit. I hope God will hear prayer, and bring souls to bow to him."

"*Jan.* 19*th.*

MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,—I love to think of you all, and to talk of you, and now and then to weep. It does me good.

We held our prayer-meeting on Thursday afternoon, at two o'clock. There were thirteen present. C. went in to the meeting,—made a few remarks and prayed,—which seemed to gratify the good ladies exceedingly. It is what

they have not been accustomed to here. The last pastor they had *never* went into a meeting of that kind, though repeatedly urged to do so. I do not know his reasons for declining. We had a very interesting and solemn meeting. There are good praying sisters here,—those who pray as if they often attended to the duty. Their prayers were spiritual, intelligent, fervent, and edifying. I felt that I had got into a good place, and my soul was refreshed. Next week they will meet here in our room. Will you come? Think of us there. I shall take *my class* to-morrow. I anticipate it with pleasure. We take the first lesson, in Newcomb's Question Book, on Romans. The Bible-class of Wednesday evening will serve as a great assistance to me, in instructing my class on the Sabbath. It will answer the purpose of a teachers' meeting. They cannot hold teachers' meetings, for the teachers are so scattered. The superintendent lives four and a half miles from the church. The Bible-class is very interesting. The members answer very readily, and very intelligibly, and I doubt not it will prove very servicable. A great deal of interest is manifested by all. There were between forty and fifty present. The meetings increase in interest, I am told, and the number has greatly increased.

I think there is a wide field of useful labor opened before us, and I most fervently pray that we may grow in grace ourselves, and be instrumental of great good to others.

I am much obliged to you, dear brother, for *journalizing*. I was interested in reading it, and hope you will write me soon again, and the oftener the better. I think Mrs. —— managed very well about her party, to prevent dancing. I heard nothing of it before you wrote me. I do not much wonder that people talk about it, when I think

"Undeserving of others' good opinion."

how much Providence people love to talk. I was interested too in hearing of the temperance meeting,—indeed every thing concerning Providence interests me. Do write very often, both of you. I will excuse you for showing Mrs. —— my letter, for I know just what a queer woman she is. I am greatly obliged to her for her compliment, and only wish she could pay them with more reason for doing so. I am not as deserving of the good opinion of my friends as I wish I were.

You inquire what I think *now* of 'single blessedness.' Well, dear E., I am willing all who prefer it, should have their way, but I am very happy, being married, and have no disposition to get *un*married. * * *

You say I must 'write soon, and tell you every thing,' but my sheet is too small to contain every thing, and I will lay up a few things on the *high shelf* to tell you when I go home. I long to see every one of you. You cannot think how long it seems since I saw you."

To her mother.—Jan. 22d.

* * * "The *lump* containing the love of so many which you sent me, was very acceptable. I am very glad to find they remember me and miss me, for I should be quite unwilling to feel that I am not remembered by many in Providence whom I very dearly love. As you see my friends, I wish you would give my love to them, without my naming them separately. I should like to send my love to my Sabbath scholars, particularly. Ask Elizabeth to give my love to them, for she occasionally sees some of them. I think much of them, and love them very much. I have taken a class here of six—*ladies* between twenty-five and forty years old. They are all unmarried but *one*.

"Pleasantly situated."—Whole families introduced.

I think I shall be interested in them. I have only met them once. The superintendent seemed quite regardless of my age, in giving me scholars who were all older than myself. Some of them are pious I believe. I hope to do them good. I am happy to be again in the Sabbath-school, for there I am at *home*. The school is in a flourishing condition,—larger than it has been for a long time. There are a great number of adults in the school, which adds much to the interest. The school is held at noon, during the intermission. We have but a short time to meet, as the meeting commences a little after *one* o'clock. We have fifteen or twenty minutes recess after the school closes, and I have the last two Sabbaths been into Col. V.'s, to spend that little time. I need a little respite, and Mrs. V. is very anxious to have me go there and take a lunch before meeting. I think it is very kind in her, and I shall *often* go. It is directly opposite the church, and it refreshes me very much. It makes the service very long, to go at half past ten, and remain till three o'clock. C. visits the school about twice a month, addresses it, and offers prayer, and the effect appears to be very good.

The people here appear very much attached to their pastor, and no effort is spared to promote his happiness. They remember the charge of Mr. Brigham, at the installation; and wherever we call, the whole family are called together and introduced to us both without delay. They invariably urge us to remain to tea. I am sure, dearest mother, you would be gratified, could you see how very pleasantly we are situated, and how happy we are here,—and how very kindly we are received. There seems but *one feeling*, and that is a cordial and kind one. We could not help loving persons who are so kind to us. We have no calls in the morning, and seldom make any till after-

A melancholy death.—Pastoral visits.

noon. We yesterday called on two families in the morning. We attended a funeral at ten, A. M., two miles distant,—and having an hour before dinner, we called on two families who were a mile from the house where the funeral was. The funeral we attended was that of a young man of twenty-eight, who died Saturday of liver complaint. His father is a pious man, but he has not a child who loves God, though he has a large family. During the sickness of the young man, —— would not allow any one to go into his room who would speak to him of his soul, and the young man died unconcerned of his guilt and danger. He had absented himself from the house of God for three years. It was indeed a melancholy death. After the prayer, the corpse was placed on a bier, covered with the pall, out in front of the house, and the family were called to go and take their leave of the deceased. It was affecting,—but so unlike any thing I have been accustomed to, that I could hardly feel as solemn as I wish in visiting the house of mourning and affliction.

Directly after dinner, we went in a different direction, to call. The extent of our ride was four and a half miles. We visited eight families. One an old lady of eighty-four years, who has been confined at home three years. She seemed grateful indeed to us for calling. She was much affected and wept like a child. I inquired of her if 'life appeared as desirable to her as it once did?' 'Oh no,' said she, 'I have most finished my days, and I am ready to go.' Calvin prayed with her, and she seemed much gratified. She is a widow, and lives in a retired situation, with a daughter who is unmarried,—and seems happy and comfortable. She loves the Saviour, and says she enjoys his presence. We then visited a poor sick woman, who is the most pitiable object I ever saw. She has been sick

A great sufferer.—Remembers *her* blessings.

nine months, with a polypus on her face, and she is so disfigured that it is trying to look at her. One eye is closed, and she can scarcely open her mouth. She is in constant pain, and can scarcely keep still. She is as poor as she can well be,—but she is rich in faith. She has a husband, who ought to love her; but he is forgetful of his vows, and abuses her shamefully. He is a *drunken* ——; and a son too, who ought to comfort and support her, follows his father's footsteps, and is an abusive, wicked man. I cannot possibly paint the case in sufficiently glowing colors. It is beyond description." * * *

In reference to the same sufferer, she wrote in her journal at this date:—

"She desired Mr. W. to pray with her, but in consequence of the presence of her husband and son, she dared not have him. I sat by her side, and found it good to converse with her. I never felt that I ought to be truly grateful to God for *my* blessings, as I did in visiting this poor woman. I trust I shall profit by it."

"*Hopkinton, Mass., Jan.* 26, 1839.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—It is a very long time since I used my pen in your behalf. I did not think when you left us, that I should neglect writing you until this time, but I have been so much occupied the last few months, in preparations for being married and leaving home, that I have really not found time to address a letter to you.

The people are kind, social, familiar, and obliging. I have seen quite a large number of them, and am pleased with their appearance. I feel quite at home here, and am very happy in my new situation. I am very kindly and cordially received by the people here, and have not been

"Finds much refinement and intelligence, and good common sense."

at all homesick or discontented. I have received letters from some of the family twice a week, and write them as often. I think we could not be more pleasantly situated away from our friends. There have been nearly fifty to call upon us already, though we have only been here three weeks. Many of the people are two or three miles from us, and some four or five; but having a horse and chaise at our disposal, we find no difficulty in getting to see them. We have been invited out several times, and the general appearance of the people pleases me very much. There is a great deal of refinement and intelligence here, and much *good common sense*. I think it must be very delightful in the summer season. I hope if you come north, you will come and see us.

How do you like St. Joseph's? I presume you have formed some acquaintances by this time, and feel quite at home. I wish you would write me soon, and tell me all about your situation. I shall rejoice to hear from you.

The situation in which I am placed here, dear William, is a very trying and responsible one,—trying because the eyes of all are upon me, watching every motion, and almost reading my thoughts; and responsible, as being the wife of the pastor of this people. When I think that my husband is placed over this people in the Lord, and that upon him rests the responsibility of showing this people their sins, and pointing them to the city of refuge, I am filled with a sense of my obligation to God, to be to him a *helpmeet* in his work, and not a hindrance. I hope we may labor here unitedly, to promote the cause of our blessed Saviour, who has done so much for us. There is much that we can do here, and I trust we are happy in being *permitted* to labor for our best friend. It is a pleasant service. I wish I could persuade my brother to

make Jesus his friend. Why not repent of sin, and turn from your evil ways, and live? Religion is that which will sustain you in death, and be *all beyond*. Present my kind regards to Capt. Rogers. With the hope of soon hearing from you, I will bid you good morning. My husband unites with me in much love to you.

Believe me, dear brother, as ever, your very affectionate sister, REBECCA."

In allusion to her asking a letter of dismission from the High-street Church in Providence, she wrote, Jan. 26th:

"It was very painful to me to ask a dismission from the dear church with which I have been connected more than four years. I love that church; I love their pastor; and I love all the interests of that church and that Sabbath-school. I hope God will bless them, and speedily revive his work among them. And that he will make me a useful member of the church in this place is my most earnest desire."

"Sabbath, Jan. 27. I had an interesting conversation with Mrs. ——, one of my Sabbath scholars, at noon. She was quite affected and wept. I hope to be faithful to her soul, and lead her to Christ. After tea, this evening, my husband and myself had a precious conversation. We confessed to each other our sins and remissness in duty, particularly secret prayer; freely unbosomed our religious feelings, and wept in view of our responsibilities in this place, and our unfitness for duty, and then united our prayers together—pleading with God to make us truly penitent and humble in view of our unfaithfulness, and to grant us grace to discharge the duties incumbent upon us. The interests of this people lay near our hearts, and we

Distance does not lessen attachment.—"Cares already begin to press."

hope to be a blessing to them. There are various ways in which we may do them good, and I trust God will show us what he will have us to do."

To her father.—Feb. 1st.

"I am grieved to learn of the severe illness of my dearest mother. E. wrote very particularly, for which I am very grateful. I hope always to know the *true case* of those in sickness, and hope you will write *definitely*. I think she must have suffered very much, and wish I could have been with her. I love to watch over and nurse the sick. I doubt not A. has proved a very good nurse. I know, however, that she must have felt quite incompetent to her task; and then being alone, her care and anxiety must have been great. I am fearful that mother's hearing is affected by her illness, as you spoke of reading my letters through a trumpet. I hope she is not going to be farther troubled. I feel badly to think of being so far from you now she is sick. I should love to be able to administer to her wants, and thus prove the strength of a daughter's affection. Distance from you does not lessen my attachment for you all,—nor do the novelties of being in a new place, seeing daily new faces, or even being constantly in the society of a beloved husband, make me forget my very dear parents, brothers, sisters, and friends, whom I left behind. Far from it. I think the effect has been the contrary. I love you all better now than ever. I did not write you yesterday, because I was not in a good state to write. I was anxious, and I waited to get a letter by to-day's mail. I hope you were not disappointed. I find already cares pressing upon me, and I am happy to do all I can. This is a good field to work in, and I hope it may be well cultivated, and many here be made to re-

joice in a Saviour. I love the people. They have won my heart. There are many excellent men and women here—though some *tares* among the *wheat*."

To a former Sabbath-school pupil.—Feb. 19th.

"How is it with you, my dear E——? Are you still rejecting the offers of mercy and salvation, or have you made Jesus your friend? Remember, 'if thou be wise, thou must be wise for thyself,—but if thou *scornest*, thou alone must bear it.' How can you scorn the messages of the blessed Jesus? How can you 'set at naught all his counsel,'—how despise his reproof? I have often entreated you to repent of, and forsake your sins,—but you have disregarded the entreaty, and persisted in your evil course. Where your course will end, E., I cannot tell. Sin brings with it its own punishment,—its 'wages are death.' You are not ignorant of your duty, and consequently not *innocent* if you neglect it. God calls you to repentance, Jesus entreats, Christian friends expostulate, the Holy Spirit strives, and in short all things are ready for you to come to Jesus, and become reconciled to him. Why, oh why delay? What will you gain by the delay? Besides, recollect that God has said, 'My Spirit shall not always strive.' And if you grieve it now, when *you* are *ready* to become a Christian, you may be rejected of God. Then *he* may laugh at *your* calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. Resolve then, dear E., to neglect no longer the salvation of your immortal soul, but repent and turn from your evil ways and live. Life is short and uncertain. Death may be at hand; and the offer is not for tomorrow, next week, month, or year,—but '*to-day*,'—'*now*.' Hasten then and be wise, and 'stay not for the morrow's sun.' I can only add, for the time is expired which I can

Visits Almshouse.—"I want you to pray for *my soul*."

spare to address you, 'What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his *soul?*'

Write me soon; direct, care of Rev. J. C. W. Now dear E., though in great haste, believe me *as ever*, your affectionate friend, R. G. WEBSTER."

"Tuesday, Feb. 12th. We went this afternoon to visit the Almshouse, kept by Mr. and Mrs. C., both members of our church. There are now about twenty-four inmates, most of whom are quite advanced in life; conversed with some of them. Mr. W. left them some tracts, and prayed with them. It did me good to go there.

We visited old Mr. and Mrs. A., who are, in consequence of their infirmities, unable to get out to church. Both are professors of religion. We called to see the poor sick Mrs. P., whom we visited once before, and to whom I alluded under date of Jan. 21st. She rejoiced to see us, and desired Mr. W. to pray with her. She suffers exceedingly with her face. There is no cessation of her pain, though some days it is more acute than on others. I think she will soon depart, and be in a far happier state. May she have grace to sustain her during her few remaining days on earth.

We next called to see an old lady of seventy-three years —a widow for the second time. She is now in a very anxious state of mind, and was deeply affected. Her sins trouble her, and she don't know what to do. She reads the promises of God's word, but cannot adopt them as her own. She wept aloud. The interview was very affecting. She asked C. to pray with her, and said, 'I want you to pray for *my soul*. I am not anxious for *long life*.' During prayer she sobbed like a child. I hope the interview will be sanctified to her soul, and that she will come to

Boy who "never went to *meeting*, and never went to but one *ball*."

Jesus. C. directed her to Jesus as the only refuge, and was faithful to her."

To her parents.—March 26th.

* * * "Mr. Webster met a little boy Saturday, between here and the church, and inquired of him if he 'attended Sabbath-school?' The boy answered, '*No.*' 'Dont you want to go?' 'Yes, I should like to go, but I have'nt got clothes to wear.' 'Do you go to meeting?' 'No, I *never went to meeting in my life*, and never went to but *one ball*'—as if the *ball* was of *more* importance than *meeting*. He learned his name and residence, and found he lived almost under the droppings of the sanctuary, and never went to church. The boy inquired, 'Do you keep the meeting, sir?' How melancholy to think a boy of twelve years, in this town, should never have been to the house of God. He appeared as unenlightened as a heathen." * * *

In relation to a parishioner's death, she wrote in the same letter:—

"Her husband is a *drunkard*. He came in Friday noon, and acted *like a drunken* man. He cursed God for laying upon his wife such suffering, and said *he* would not have put it upon a dumb brute. He did not seem to care much for his wife, for he would leave her every few minutes, to go down to the hotel for a glass of rum; and supposing she would die of course immediately, (on *Friday*,) he appointed the *funeral* to be at one o'clock on Sunday—though she lived till Saturday, and was not buried till Monday morning at ten o'clock. * * * Mr. Webster went in there in the evening, Friday, and inquired how his

Rum and brandy at a funeral.—Tolling bell at sunset.

wife did. He said she has got to die, there was no two ways about that,' and said to Mr. W., 'She is one of your *society*, you can go to prayer with her if you've a mind to; *you can pray just as well as not.*' * * *

His daughter said, at noon, she believed he had been *fifteen times* that day to the hotel to drink. He insisted on *treating* at the funeral. He had brandy and rum for the *men*, and thought he must get some wine for the ladies, but they would not allow him to offer his treat."

"Sabbath, March 17th. I find in my heart 'no good thing.' I am ashamed at my stupidity, my lukewarmness, my indifference to holy things. I long to enjoy a visit from the dear Redeemer.

At sunset, I listened at my east window to hear the 'bell, with *solemn toll*, speak the departure of a soul.' I counted the number of times it tolled, to learn the age of the 'departed one.' It was a person of ninety years,—old Mrs. ——, the oldest member of our church, who died this morning at two o'clock. How few attain to such an age; but the great thing is, to be ready to go, when our 'Lord shall call us.'

Commenced to-day to read the 'Memoirs of Mrs. Sarah Hawkes,' a book which was presented me by my friend Mrs. ——, at the time of my marriage. I am pleased with it."

To her sister, after visiting Providence.—April 16th.

"A neighbor of ours, ——, died Friday; was sick only six days. Mr. W. did not know of her sickness when he went to P., and we were both surprised to hear of her death. They had sent to Westboro' for the Rev. Mr. K.,

"Minister needed at home."—"Gift of a building spot."

to attend her funeral,—and in case Mr. W. returned by twelve yesterday, they were to send him word, and he would not come. It was very inconvenient for him to come. They immediately sent to him when we arrived, so that he did not come. It seems quite necessary that a minister should be at home, does'nt it?

In the mean time, one of our good brethren called and told Mr. Webster that Col. Valentine wished very much to see him. He went there—and what do you think? Why he had got a deed of land all made out for Mr. W., which he *presented* to 'him, his heirs, and assigns, forever.' It is about a third of an acre of land, worth perhaps $200. It is situated just where we *want it*, and on the west side of the road, so that the house of the elder will front the east, as we desire. This is a very generous present for the Col., and we feel very grateful for such kindness.

So you see Mr. W. is a *free holder*. The ground is too wet now, after such a drenching rain, to dig up; but they will probably begin next Monday. They seem quite awake in the business, and there is sufficient money subscribed to build the house,—I mean with what they borrow of the parish.

I have to answer continually the question, 'How did *you leave* your mother?' I reply, 'She *left me* pretty well—is travelling at the south,' etc. Others inquire, 'How is your mother getting along?' I reply, 'She is getting along towards the south quite fast,' etc. They had generally got the impression that I had gone home because she was very sick. I have to explain all the case, and am tired already of telling the story."

"Saturday, April 27. At two o'clock, I met the children of the congregation, agreeable to appointment, in the

Meets the children of the congregation.

vestry. I thought fifteen or twenty might assemble; but to my utter astonishment, eighty-three came—thirty-one boys and fifty-two girls—from the young lady of fifteen years to the little boy of two years old. I talked to them about the heathen children, and proposed to them, each to *earn one cent a week*, and bring it to me; and when they had got $12, I would send it to the American Board, and they would see that a little heathen boy should be educated with their money. They appeared much pleased with the proposition, and all consented to earn a cent per week for this purpose. I told them they could name the child whatever they chose to. They chose to call it after their minister, John C. Webster, and they preferred to educate a little boy to a girl, because he might perhaps by and by become a *missionary*. I told them I would meet them once a month, on Saturday afternoon, and give them instruction if they wished it, and they could bring me each their four cents earned, and I would take care of it for them. They appeared much interested, and I hope good will result from the meeting. I related several anecdotes. I also told them, I would next month have a constitution, and we would have a regular society. Gave them, as a lesson for next month, the character of Adam and Eve."

To a friend in Providence.—March 4th.

"Pleasantly situated though I am, dear sister, I find my thoughts often, very often, wandering *homeward* to my dear friends in Providence, whom I have left behind, and I need hardly say that my thoughts often recur to the dear church in High-street,—a church which is very dear to my heart, as being a branch of Christ's vine; and doubly so, in consideration of the fact that I was one of its original

Interest in former church connection.

members. In relation to the interests of that dear church, how many questions rush into my mind. Respecting its prosperity I have heard nothing since I was last with you. Let me first inquire, how are all the dear brethren and sisters of the church walking? Is the spirit of the Lord amongst you? Are the church humble, and are they crying mightily to the Lord that he would open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing? Do you pray fervently, importunately, and *perseveringly*, for your pastor, whose labors cannot be efficient without his church give him their prayers? Do you all coöperate with him in efforts to convert sinners? How much are you, my dear sister, doing to advance Christ's kingdom on *Christian Hill?*

What are the dear sisters of *our* praying circle doing for the Saviour, who has redeemed them from the bondage of sin? Do they bear in mind, think you, that had not Christ died for them, they must have been *forever* cast out from the presence of the Lord? Oh that Christians would look at their obligations to the Saviour, and act in accordance with those obligations; then might we hope for the dawning of that day when the 'kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High?'

Do you believe, dear A., that all nations will ever be converted to Christ, and be governed by his friends? It seems to me that there is evidence that the light of gospel truth will shine upon all nations."

Remembrance of her father's birth-day.—Tender affection for a S. S. pupil.

To her father.—May 7th.

* * * "I could hardly have patience for them to open the mail and assort it, before I begged Mr. W. to run over and get me a letter. When he came in I was happy to see a letter in his hand and reached out for it,—when he very calmly replied, 'I have found a letter for *me*, but *none* for *you*. Oh, I was disappointed, and could have cried; but he kindly handed me the letter, and said I might read *his*, as I had none, *before he did;* and when I saw the superscription I was satisfied—it was *mine too*,—yes, from my own dear father. It was written on your *birth-day*,—when I thought of you and prayed for you. I am rejoiced that you had a pleasant and prosperous journey; that you were preserved from accident and danger; that you accomplished your object in going; that you are returned home in safety; that you are both well; that you found L. and A. well in Brooklyn,—and Elizabeth, Charles, and the children well at home. May God still bless and protect you both." * * *

"*Hopkinton, May* 8, 1839.

MY DEAR A.,—As we are now separated from each other, and deprived of the happiness of personal intercourse, I avail myself of the opportunity of addressing you by letter. Many pleasant hours have I spent, many precious seasons enjoyed with you in the Sabbath-school. But those seasons are past. I shall enjoy them with you no more. On earth, we probably shall no more assemble together in the same capacity we have been wont to do. Our intercourse was frequent, familiar, and endearing, and the thought that the tie—the sacred tie—is now sundered, is tenderly affecting to my feelings. But such is the na-

Separations.—"Tomorrow exists not."—"Religion is *everything* if *anything*"

ture of all earthly scenes. We scarcely taste their sweet endearments ere they are embittered by separation. But there is a region, where shines eternal day, 'unalloyed by a cloud, untainted by a grief.'

Earthly separations are very painful; but what are they compared with eternal separations? That there will be separations at the judgment, neither you nor I have any doubt. Let me then inquire, what are your prospects? Have you a hope—an inheritance—a treasure beyond the grave; or do your hope and portion lie below? Remember, dear friend, you are on the brink of the grave, and a step carries you beyond it. Are you saying to yourself, 'tomorrow will be time enough.' Tomorrow exists not but in anticipation. It is but the reflection of time—the shadow of a day that recedes continually as we advance, till it is lost in eternity. To-day is all of time that you have. Then delay not your soul's concerns. Delay is refusal; and refusal is base ingratitude; and ingratitude is full of danger. All honest purposes of repentance relate to the present time. Is religion worthy of *any* attention? Is there truth and importance in it? Settle this point. If you answer affirmatively, then you must admit that it is worthy of *all* attention. If it is *anything*, it is *everything*. If anything is to be *gained* or *lost* by it, everything is. If good is to be realized by it, it is the greatest good; if evil, the greatest evil. If it is worth seeking at all, it is worth seeking first. It claims immediate and most earnest attention, or no attention. If you cannot *safely* trifle with it, there is nothing so dangerous to trifle with. Religion is *everything*, or *nothing*. What think you of its value, ——? Do you desire to embrace it, and be rendered happy in time and happy in eternity? Oh, fly to Jesus, who is the only refuge. 'He calls, he bids you come.'

"Ministers' wives almost need a regular course in theology."

Refuse not the invitation. Why halt you between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him,—but if Baal be God, then follow him. Decide the question now. Momentous results are suspended on your decision. Make it therefore in view of the judgment. And may God help you to decide rightly.

Remember me very affectionately to your mother, and J. I hope you will write me soon. Time is passing, and I must close, with much love to you, and an assurance of the continued affection and regard of your unworthy friend,

R. G. WEBSTER."

To Mrs. P.

"*Andover, May* 24, 1839.
Friday, A. M.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Methinks I hear you exclaim on noticing the caption of my letter, 'What is Rebecca doing at Andover?' Well, I'll tell you. I came here intending to enter the Theological Seminary, for you know that 'now-a-days' *ministers' wives* almost need to pursue a regular course of theology, in order to fit them for their station. But I am somewhat disappointed, for the weather is quite unsuitable for me to enter. We are favored with a charming northeaster, a storm which I sometimes enjoy when I am engaged in mending a coat, or covering a stock, or mending stockings, or something else in which I feel deeply interested. But if left to choose such weather as suits my own feelings, I assure you I would never *choose* a northeast storm when about to journey. We, that is *my husband* and myself, left Hopkinton yesterday morning in the cars for Boston, where we passed seven or eight hours very pleasantly; left Boston at five for Andover, and reached here about six o'clock. After tea ran about a little, to see the wonders of Andover, until we were fa-

Plan of journey.—"Opportunities to do good daily offering."

tigued. To-day we have any thing but pleasant weather, which I regret very much, as we cannot go about at all here. We shall leave here at twelve o'clock, for Newburyport and Hampton, and on Monday or Tuesday return to Boston by way of Salem; shall attend the anniversaries in Boston, and on Friday return to Hopkinton. There is some possibility of our going to Portsmouth also, as we shall be within ten miles of P. when at Hampton, N. H. The storm is peculiarly unfavorable just now.

I wrote you not very long since, and am inclined to think you mean to wait as long to answer it, as I did to answer yours. I am happy to write even a few lines this morning. I have providentially met with one of your students, Mr. M., who says he has some acquaintance with you, and has given me quite a history of persons and things in Amherst. I am happy to meet him. He says poor S. B. has been again afflicted in the death of a brother. Poor girl, how I feel for her. How is her health? Do give my love to S. and to L., and say to them that I am anxious to hear from them. I really wish they would write me. They *both owe letters*. Things are going on prosperously with us. Our house is now in progress, and we hope to commence house-keeping as early as September, when we hope to see you at our own house. We are pleasantly and happily situated, and opportunities are daily offering where we can do good if we wish. I have not heard very recently from Providence. The last news was favorable; all well; parents returned; L. gone, etc. etc. Do write, my dear friend, very soon. I love to hear from you. Remember me affectionately to all friends. I am obliged to write hastily and carelessly, on my lap. My husband unites with me in kind regards to you and yours.

Believe me, as ever, your very affectionate friend,

REBECCA."

Goes to see H. Newell's birth-place.—Whitefield's tomb.

"Friday, 24th. We took the cars and rode eight miles to Haverhill; passed half an hour there, long enough to walk out to see the birth-place of Mrs. Harriet Newell."

The reader will please compare this passage with the notice of Mrs. Newell on page 17th.

At Newburyport she went into the tomb of Whitefield, under Temple-street church, and wrote of what she saw:—

"The sexten opened the lid down to the breast. I never felt so over a corpse before. The flesh was totally consumed, but the skull is still perfect. The coffin contained several inches deep of ashes. Many of the bones remained in their places. It is stated that some of the bones have been carried to Europe. His happy spirit—that spirit which is *immortal*—was resting in the bosom of its Maker.

Two other corpses were in the tomb,—those of Rev. Messrs. Prince and Parsons. Mr. Prince was an early minister of the Temple-street church. He was a blind man. Mr. Parsons was his successor, and though he died sixty-six years ago, (four years after Mr. Whitefield,) his skeleton is perfect,—not a bone displaced.

These are the first human skeletons I have ever looked upon. The reflections which occupied my mind, after descending into the tomb, were of a solemn, practical nature, and I desire to make a suitable use of them. 'So teach me,' oh Lord, 'to live that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.'

After dinner we took a ride to Hampton, N. H., which is nine miles from Newburyport. We passed over a chain bridge, through Salisbury, Seabrook, and Hampton Falls. Rode down to the beach. Here is a very beautiful beach, or rather two beaches—one a mile and a half long, and the

Grave of her husband's father.—Her view of Newburyport.

other two miles, separated by a promontory called 'Boar's Head.' This beach is a fine summer resort, and many strangers visit it in the warm weather. Hampton is my husband's native place. We went to the parsonage, (now occupied by Rev. Mr. Eldridge, their present pastor,) saw the room in which C. was born, and where he studied while preparing for college; also the study chamber of our dear departed father, and the room in which he died; then went to the grave, and saw the mound and the marble slab which mark the spot where our father lies, and over his grave I dropped the tear of respect and affection. I never saw him, but his memory I revere. He was the father of my beloved husband, and I love him as such,—and shall love to think of him as *my* father too. We then visited the church, which is an old building, and where father preached faithfully for thirty years, and where he preached only a fortnight before he was called 'up higher.' We called on several of his dearest friends. They spoke so kindly and affectionately of father that I loved them for his sake."

To her parents—May 29th.

* * "In Newburyport the numerous meeting-houses show that the people are accustomed to 'go up to the courts of the Lord's house,' and to worship him. One of the streets (High-street) is a very beautiful one, running north and south three or four miles. The houses are generally set back from the road, and have fine trees in front of them. This town was the residence of T. D., a very eccentric character, who in his letters put all his punctuation marks at the bottom in this way, ,, ;; :: .. ? ! etc. and said he could'nt stop to put them in their places; but the

person who received the letter could arrange them to his liking. His house is perhaps sixty or eighty feet from the road, and he formerly had his front yard filled with images. Three of them still stand on the pillars in front of his house. They were made in Newburyport—one to represent Adams, one Jefferson, and one Washington. The names are under the images. You have doubtless heard of him. * * *

The impression left on my mind, after viewing all that now remains of Mr. Whitefield, was very solemn, and I felt more than ever the need of being prepared for death, that when this body is consumed, my spirit may soar to worlds on high to dwell at the right hand of God, where it may live *forever* and ever. * * *

At Hampton, where father Webster preached, my sympathies were awakened, for he was the father of my beloved husband, and the tie which bound together their hearts was a very tender one,—and I love to *think* of him as *my father*, and to speak of him as such. We called on several of his dearest friends—tried, firm friends—and you cannot imagine how happy they seemed to see us. One lady met us at the door, shook hands, yes both hands, with Mr. W., and could not refrain from weeping. She said to him with a great deal of feeling, 'You dear child, how thankful I am to see you; it seems as if your father had come back.' Turning to me she says, 'Your husband was always a great favorite of mine, but particularly so since the death of his father; he looks just like him, and all his ways are like his. Oh, I wish you could have seen *our dear Mr. Webster;* he was a lovely man, and we can never have his place made good.' Many other warm expressions she used, and wept like a child. It was very affecting. She told me all about father's sickness and

death. She was there the last twenty-four hours of his life, and now loves to go and visit his grave. She seemed very glad to see me, and begged me to come there again and see her. One old blind lady seemed overjoyed to see us, or rather hear us. She said to me, 'I know all about you; your mother told me all about you when she was here in the winter.'"

To her parents.—June 3d.

* * * "I have been consulting a physician this morning, who thinks I am *very well indeed*, and that I need not abandon the use of tea, coffee, or meat. But to explain, Dr. P. called on us this morning on business respecting schools, and our conversation turned on those subjects. That is all. I did not *send* for him because I was sick, indeed I did not *send* at all,—and I hope he will not follow Mr. ——'s example of *charging* for unasked advice! We reached our home on Friday morning at nine and a half o'clock, quite fatigued, and glad to find a resting-place. * * *

Now for Boston. We had a very pleasant time there; arrived there Monday afternoon, and left Friday morning; there during all the meetings, and attended *ten* of them. The most interesting that I attended were those of the 'American Temperance Union,' at the Odeon, Tuesday evening; the 'Seaman's Friend Society,' and 'Tract Meetings' at the Marlboro', Wednesday morning and evening; 'New England Ladies' Moral Reform Society,' 'Mass. Sabbath School Society,' and meeting of the 'American Board of Missions,' Thursday morning, afternoon and evening. The remaining four did not interest me very much. The —— Society meeting was not re-

Interest in account of revival at the Sandwich Islands.

markable for interest. A Mr. C., of Newark, N. J., was the life of that meeting; —— spoke there, but it was not a happy effort; but at the *temperance meeting* he did nobly, so as to quite redeem his character as a good speaker. The Marlboro' Chapel, which you know is very large, and where most of the meetings were held, was crowded to overflowing. I was fortunate enough to get a seat at all the meetings, though many could not possibly be seated,—and generally a good seat too, for being so near, we usually went in early. We passed our time at the Marlboro', where we met many old friends of mine and of Mr. W.'s. The account of the meetings you will see in the papers, and some of them will doubtless interest you if you read them. They are worth reading. By the way, I wish you would read the account of the revival at the Sandwich Islands, in the June Herald. I never read so interesting a letter as that of Rev. Mr. Coan respecting it. Do read it. * * *

I was not surprised at the sickness of poor little Sarah Folsom. I could not be sorry to hear of her release from this world of sin and misery, though her parents doubtless are much tried in view of parting with her."

To her sister E.—June 11th.

"If I were keeping house, I would send expressly for —— to visit me. I think she would enjoy it, and I should love to have her come. That makes me want to keep house, that I can see my friends at my own home. I should still like very much to see her here, although I have not a home to which I can invite her. I suppose A. has returned from P. Thank her for sending that constitution. It was a *guide* in framing ours, though we did not

adopt it as it was. It helped us. We have now a new organization of the Missionary Society. The ladies appear to take hold of it with interest. We have no Mrs. H. or Mrs. C. to subscribe twenty or twenty-five dollars. The ladies are *poor* mostly, and I presume most of them earn their own money for societies by braiding straw, at two or three cents a yard, and money is not easily raised in the country. No lady has yet paid over $2, and some *cannot* give over twenty-five cents. One poor old widow handed me twelve and a half cents last week, for the society, saying it was all she had to give. I think if we can get all to give a *little*, it will be very desirable. I read the *printed card* which we circulated among our sisters before our society was formed in Providence, at one of our meetings, and some seem disposed to have a number struck off for the benefit of our church. If mother comes to H., and you have one *extra card* which you can spare, will you send it to me. I should like it for a pattern if we have some printed, and will be much obliged for it; if you have not, perhaps Ann has. Mine has my subscriptions marked down, and I should prefer not using that if I can get one. The standard of giving is too low here, and I wish it might be raised. The ladies propose raising $50 this year, which is twice the sum given last year. We have some benevolent cause presented, and a collection taken in the church once a month. We have just had the Sabbath-school cause presented, and they are trying to raise $60, half to help build up our own library, and half to aid the Mass. S. S. Society."

"Tuesday, 12th. Delightful day. Town-meeting to-day for the election of State officers. All are busy and stirring, each mindful of his own party, and making strenuous

efforts to secure the election of his favorite candidate. How foolish it all appears. Would that each could feel desirous of electing the *best man*, let him be 'whig,' 'democrat,' or 'loco foco.' But we see much of the little personal pronoun I in all these affairs. I will have *my man* says one, and so says a *second*, and so a *third*. To-day they have *six candidates* for Representatives.

Saturday, 15th. Met the 'Children's Mite Society,' at two, in the church; fifty-seven children present. Had a good time with them. They brought contributions to the amount of $2,30. On my return, at three and a half o'clock, I found, to my surprise, my beloved father and mother waiting here to see me. I was happy, very happy, to see them; ten weeks have passed since I saw them, which is the longest time ever passed between our seeing each other since my remembrance. I have not before seen a single member of our family here, and am very much gratified. They will pass their time with us, at Col. V.'s. After tea, we walked out, to see our new house,—and walked about a mile and a half to see something of our town. Beautiful walk, and my parents were much pleased with what they saw.

Tuesday, 18th. Last night we were awakened at midnight by the cry of fire, and not afar off, but within our own borders. The Col.'s barn was in flames, and but for the watchful care of a faithful dog, we should doubtless have had a raging fire. It was the work of an incendiary, too plain to be *doubted*. The fire was kindled in a calf-pen, on a *corner* of the barn, in which were two little calves. It burnt upwards a dozen feet perhaps on the corner of the barn. Just over the corner were several tons of hay—the only part of the barn (which is very large) in which there was hay. It burnt through the timber on the

A faithful dog their means of rescue.

corner, and in fifteen minutes more, unless discovered, it would have reached the hay, and the barn must have gone, then the house—for the wind favored it—and all the outbuildings, shed, stable, slaughter-house, and smoke-house, must have gone. The barn, which is the old meeting-house, was plastered inside, and that doubtless saved the building. I earnestly hope the wretch will be discovered, and punished. The dog barked round the house two hours; but for a short time he barked louder and harder, and aroused —— in the back of the house, who looked out of his window and discovered the flames. They succeeded in putting out the fire with a few pails of water; but had it proceeded farther, it is not probable that it could have been extinguished. We have great cause for gratitude to God for such a wonderful preservation.

Wednesday, 19th. We are constantly kept in suspense, lest a second attempt to fire the building will be made. I am in fear, and am very uneasy; but God will take care of those who trust him."

"*Hopkinton, June* 18, 1839.

MY DEAR M. E. E.,—I have written to Joanna, and must take a few moments from other important avocations, to say a few words to you. I do not know whether I promised to write you or not, but be that as it may, I have always intended to write you, and certainly thought I should have done it at an earlier day. I find much to occupy my time, and do not write as frequently to my friends as I should like to do. I often think of you, and fancy you as engaged either in work or study. Perhaps preparing yourself for your daily recitations, or busily engaged with your Sabbath-school lesson, or some useful piece of work, or taking your accustomed walk, as I hope you

"Shall I address you as a Christian or a sinner?"

do,—sometimes going to your sister E.'s, and often seated with your book or work at your mother's side. And, my dear M., I like to think of you, and often wish to see you. Were I to see you now, could you tell me any thing that would interest me? Could you tell me that you were rejoicing in the Saviour, and that you were conscious of pardoned sins? How is it now with you? Shall I address you as a Christian or a sinner? Have you any evidence that Christ is yours and you are his? Can your dear teacher rejoice over any of you as the disciples of Jesus? Or must his heart yet bleed in seeing you refuse his calls and despise his love? M., if you ever become a Sabbath-school teacher, you will then be able to know the trials, the distresses, the perplexities, and the discouragements of the S. S. teacher. The *anxieties* too, you will know and feel, and they will well nigh crush you, and you will wonder *you* did not *earlier* take heed to the advice and admonitions of faithful S. S. teachers. And now, that you may not have to look back upon a mis-spent life, broken resolutions, and aggravated sins, with deep regret, let me entreat you to listen to the present inviting words of the crucified but risen Saviour, 'Whoso cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' 'Come, there yet is room.' 'Come unto me, and I will give you rest.' This is a favored opportunity. 'Tis the voice of Jesus which calls, and bids you come. Can you, dare you slight the invitation? If you do, he may not repeat it, and you run the risk of losing your precious soul. * * * Will you, oh will you slight Christ's grace, and die? Take care, lest you ruin your soul. Why not turn from your evil ways and live? Why procrastinate? The angel of death may soon, and suddenly summons you to appear before an offended God. How will you meet him? How will you appear at his bar—*guilty* or *not guilty?* Let not

Rejoicing at conversion of one of her S. S. pupils in Hopkinton.

the repeated warnings addressed to you fall as water upon the ground, but listen to them and obey them.

I shall ever be happy to hear from you, and hope soon to hear you have made choice of the 'better part.'

Your sincere friend, R. G. WEBSTER.

P. S. I have a scholar whose name is M. A. E., and I think of her when I see you."

To a former Sabbath-school pupil.—June 18th.

* * * "I have been made to rejoice recently in the hopeful conversion of a member of my class in the Sabbath-school. She appears well—has publicly confessed Christ to the world. Another member of the class is anxious for her soul. I hope God will own and bless my labors here. I desire to do good to my class.

Emma, I wish you had heeded my instructions while I labored as your teacher, and had through them been made wise unto salvation. The word was sown, but seemed to fall either among thorns or by the way-side. Have you now a faithful Sabbath-school teacher? Are you being taught the way to become reconciled to God? Were you now to be called suddenly into eternity, and had no farther opportunity to hear the message of mercy, the offers of salvation, could you be guiltless before God, if you died impenitent? Are you at all ignorant of the way of salvation? Emma, you are fully aware of your duty, and this fact enhances your guilt, so long as you remain an unconverted sinner. How long do you intend that this term, *unconverted sinner*, shall be applied to you? Oh, that I could persuade you to be *wise*, to secure your own salvation; but if you *will* perish, you *must* perish, and I cannot

save you. It will give me pleasure to hear from you, and particularly to hear that you are reconciled to God.

Remember me kindly to your parents, and believe me, dear Emma, your affectionate friend,

R. G. WEBSTER."

"Thursday, 27th. Wrote to my mother this morning, and this afternoon attended the sisters' prayer-meeting at the house of our aged sister, Mrs. H. We had eleven present, and quite a good season. I read from 'Nevins' Thoughts,' an article on 'inconsistency of Christians.' Since tea have listened with interest to some portions of 'Slavery as it is,' which my husband read to me. It is the 'testimony of a thousand witnesses,' prepared by Theodore D. Weld, in a pamphlet form. My heart bled in view of the sufferings of the poor slaves. It is distressing beyond measure. The cruelties inflicted are of such a nature as scarcely a human being *can* contrive. Lord have mercy on the oppressed."

To her mother.—June 27th.

* * * "I hope you have no cause to regret having paid a visit to your *country children.* * * Yesterday afternoon Mrs. V., with three or four of her grand-children, Miss B., and I went off to pick strawberries. We went up to the '*city*,' so called, three miles from here, and picked two or three hours. They were 'few and far between,' and so small that they seemed hardly worth picking. It has been so rainy that they are neither very sweet nor large. I never went on such an '*exertion* of pleasure' before. I picked a *pail full.* The pail held three pints. All together we picked about *eight quarts.*

New house.—Kindness of parishioners.

We do not yet ascertain who set the barn on fire. There is no *proof*, though the Col. suspects a man. He cannot take him up on suspicion. I wish he could be detected, for that would doubtless put a stop to the fires. We do not feel so alarmed as we did, though we feel that we are liable to be troubled again.

Monday and Tuesday I made twenty calls,—eight of them on persons I have never seen before. It seems as if there is no end to calling. I have now made calls on 128 families, and on several I have repeated the calls from two to six or eight times. The sick I am always ready and willing to see. The people are very good in calling here. We had four in to pass the evening with us last evening.

The house is growing finely,—garret stairs up, chamber floors laid, and the rooms lathed. The outside of the house is partly painted, kitchen floor laid, windows all in, etc. Mr. I. means to be ready to plaster next week,—so that we shall be able to get in one of these days. Perhaps may be able to get in in August. If so, I shall come and make you a visit of two or three weeks before we move."

To her sister.—July 2d.

* * * "Friends are kind to us. They are so much better to us than we deserve, that we wonder how they happen to be so kind. Two of our principal men—one a church member and the other a valuable citizen—told Mr. W. last evening, they hoped we should live and die among them. They manifest a deep interest in our earthly habitation. * * *

Then Mr. Lewis has been to see you. I was very glad to hear it. It was doubtless very agreeable to all to see him, and I know how you felt. * * * I should love to

meet Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, and Mr. and Mrs. Waterman. I should be delighted to hear Mr. W. and Mr. L. preach."

"11th. Went three quarters of a mile to attend the prayer-meeting. Miss P. accompanied me. It was held at Mrs. E.'s. No others went. We had a good meeting however. All prayed. At six, Bible class. Miss —— and Mrs. —— called here after Bible class. Mrs. —— indulges a hope in Christ. I inquired after her evidences. She said they were a 'fondness for religious meetings,' 'love for Christians,' their society and conversation, 'love for the Bible and prayer.' She conversed very well. I hope she is a Christian.

Friday, July 12, 1839. I intended to spend this as a day of fasting and prayer, for a deeper work of grace in my soul. But I have not done it, and have had rather a restless, uneasy day—no spiritual enjoyment—difficult to pray, or even fix my mind on spiritual things. In attempting to examine my own heart, I found Satan prevailed, and I had to give it up.

To-day I complete my twenty-fifth year. How important the changes of the past year in my history.

I received a letter from Mrs. P., of Amherst, last evening, who informed me of the death of my dear friend, S. B., of Hadley, of consumption. She died in faith. She was a lovely girl of about twenty-one, and a correspondent of mine. We have now *closed* our correspondence, and she has gone to her rest. Peace to thy ashes, dear Sarah, and rest to thy soul!

Sabbath, Aug. 4th. At Providence. I went into the High-street Sabbath-school this morning, and took charge of a class of six little girls. Endeavored to be faithful to them.

Visits Sabbath-school in Providence.—Hears Rev. Mr. Scoble.

Sabbath, 18th. Visited Dr. Tucker's Sabbath-school—but how changed since I was a teacher there! Scarce five years since I left the school. I looked around for the teachers who were then in the school. I could see but two females who were then there, and but five males, ——, ——, ——, ——, ——. The two females were Mrs. ——, and Miss ——. Those who were then in my class are scattered,—some are teachers, having been converted; others left the school;—not a remnant left. The school looked thin."

To her husband.—Aug. 19th.

"Is it *well* with my husband? I wish I could be permitted to ask the question so as to get an immediate reply. As I cannot, I shall *hope* the question may be answered affirmatively. I have just returned from High-street church, where I listened for an hour and a half with much interest to the remarks of Rev. John Scoble, of England, who gave us an account of the abolition of slavery in the British West-India Islands. The audience was large and attentive, and I doubt not most or all were edified. Various questions were propounded to him by different gentlemen, which he answered satisfactorily. Among those who asked questions were the *Rev. Mr. P.*, who preached last winter at U. one or two Sabbaths, and *Mr. R.*, whom we heard at the temperance meeting recently. Mr. R., after asking several questions, proposed one like this, 'whether the abolition of slavery in the West Indies had been the means of increasing or lessening *amalgamation*.' Mr. Scoble very modestly replied, 'That, sir, is a very delicate subject to handle here,—I pray thee have me excused.' This answer called forth cheers from every

part of the house. I was myself delighted with the reply, particularly as it was made with such ease and so much modesty. I liked the meeting very much."

CHAPTER XIV.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER DEVELOPED BY PROTRACTED SICKNESS IN 1839.

THE following narrative is in her own language and that of her friends, as contained in letters and in her journal.

"*Providence, Aug.* 26, 1839.

MY DEAR HUSBAND,—I know a letter will be a very poor substitute for a wife, on your arrival at Upton tomorrow. I am sorry to disappoint you, and am sorry to be disappointed myself, but circumstances beyond my control will prevent our meeting tomorrow. I feel rather too weak to begin to work hard so soon. Father and mother think I had better wait a day or two until I get a little stronger, and I concur in the opinion. Should I go tomorrow, I should feel as if I *must* begin work Wednesday, at the house, and I might get sick by so doing. Mother is rather unfit to go tomorrow also. As she is quite exhausted, and all things considered, I think we had better defer it for a day or two. I am sorry, dear, but yet it seems to be best. God knows, and he has, I trust, ordered it. Let us quietly submit. He has smiled thus far, and we have no occasion to complain. Let me urge you not to feel any degree of

anxiety respecting me. If I were seriously sick I should not fail to tell you, or were it necessary for you to come to P., I would write to that effect; but it is not. * * * Have got through all preparations for going to H., and there is no more now to do. I think I shall soon gain strength and return to you as bright as a dollar. I feel as well as when I wrote you Wednesday last. I could go to-morrow and sit down and be a lady, as I have been, but that is not desirable you know. It is now late, and you will excuse my adding more.

Accept much love from your ever affectionate and devoted wife, REBECCA."

"*Providence, Aug.* 30, 1839.
Friday evening.

MY VERY DEAR HUSBAND,—That Providence which has thus far smiled upon us, seems now—for some wise reason doubtless—to wear a frowning face. Again you and I are doomed to disappointment; I have almost been ready to indulge wrong feelings, and did I not know that our Heavenly Father orders all things, I fear I should be unsubmissive. It is now raining very fast. We have had a very stormy day—a regular north-east storm. Instead of diminishing, it increases, and the present prospect is, that it will be very stormy tomorrow. If so, it will be very hazardous for me to go. * * * Now give up expecting me, and I will give up all anxiety, and when God favors it I shall start. I know you will not wish me to start either in a storm, or when I feel at all unwell. This suspense is dreadful, and I wish it could be prevented. But 'what can't be cured must be endured.'"

She returned through Boston on Monday.

Finds house arranged.—"Constituted a *family*."—Gratitude to her father.

"Tuesday, Sept. 3d. This morning commenced work at our house. During my absence several of the ladies very kindly came here, and with Mr. W.'s assistance, got some of the things arranged,—crockery unpacked, washed, and set up; paint and floors cleaned; bedsteads up; and one carpet down. It was very unexpected to me, and feeling quite unwell, I was much obliged to the ladies for their timely assistance."

"*Hopkinton, Sept.* 5, 1839.
Thursday, A. M.

MY DEAR FATHER,—I have stopped work to send you a line to-day. We are all well and in fine spirits. Mother and Eliza arrived at Upton about four o'clock on Tuesday, where they found Mr. Webster waiting for them. They had a comfortable ride, and reached here in safety.

When I came into the house, I found all the boxes unpacked, and the crockery washed and set into the closets. We were most happy, I assure you dearest father, to sit down at our own table, in our own house, and to be constituted a *family*. We have long looked forward to this day, and we are now happy that it has come.

Now, my dear father, I have to express my warmest thanks to you for your great kindness in providing things for my comfort, so convenient and so much to my mind. I have *all* I can ask or desire you to grant. I wished very much to express my obligations to you before I left, but I could not. My feelings would not admit of it. I knew I should fail if I attempted it, and I chose to defer it till I should write you. I can never do any thing to half compensate for the unbounded goodness of my dear parents."

Disappointed by domestic help.—Looks to God to *provide* it.

"Friday, 27th. This morning I went over to Upton to carry my brother William, to meet the stage for Providence. On my return, went in pursuit of a girl, to come and live with us. I was under the necessity of doing this on account of being obliged to lose E. She is homesick and discontented, and will leave me on Monday. I am very sorry, but this is one of the difficulties of house-keeping. I expect to be left alone, and at present I am quite unwell, and unable to do my work, but I will trust in God, and perhaps he will provide some one for me."

To her mother.—Oct. 15th.

"We are comfortably situated this very stormy day,—both in the study before a good fire, and very thankful that we are so highly favored as to be protected from the inclemency of the weather. The Lord has been and is still very kind and merciful to us. He opens the hearts and hands of our friends here, and daily supplies us. We see every day new cause for gratitude to our Heavenly Parent, and I hope we shall never forget the source from whence our blessings flow. I don't know the reason of the people's being so kind to us. 'Tis not because we are deserving of their kindnesses.

I see by the Recorder, that 'William Russell is to deliver a lecture tomorrow afternoon at half past three o'clock at Tremont Hall, Boston.' Subject 'The elementary schools in Scotland.' Is it father or William? I must try to go."

"*Oct. 20th.*

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—I have been hoping all the week that the Saturday's stage would bring you

here, but 'disappointments are the lot of all.' Hope you will improve the earliest opportunity to visit us, for we really wish to see you here.

Now for the next question,—'What I think of going home to make a visit.' Well, it would give me very great pleasure to do so, and if I were boarding out, I would think seriously of it; but as circumstances are all against it, I dare not even think of it. I thank you for the kind invitation, and should be very happy to see you all and pass a little time with you. At present I must decline the invitation, for several reasons. I am now a house-keeper, and I have cares which naturally devolve upon me and which I cannot throw off,—for if I went to P., I should carry them with me. I am a wife too, and I cannot feel willing to go off and leave my husband here to keep house; and I have company now, and that makes it necessary for me to be at home. Two of Mr. W.'s cousins came on Tuesday evening to visit us. One from Washington city, and the other from Augusta in Maine.

Now for my health. I see no visible change since I sent you paper on Tuesday. I hope the rheumatism is better however. I have great faith in Dr. B., and I think he perfectly understands my case. Mr. W. has been down to Boston two days this week. He went on Monday, and there met his cousins on their way here; so he came up with them on Tuesday evening. He went to see one of the most eminent physicians there—Dr. Shattuck—told him my aches and ails, etc. etc. His opinion agrees with Dr. B.'s respecting my complaint. Both enjoin *quietude*. Dr. S. says Dr. B. is a '*very prudent man*,' and he thinks will do every thing that can be done by any one, and said he to Mr. W., 'I would be willing to commit a *wife* or *daughter* to his hands.' So that I feel much easier in be-

ing in his care, knowing he stands so high in the opinion of so eminent a physician as Dr. S. But I desire to feel that I must look higher than to the arm of man. I would look to the Great Physician—even the heavenly. Both physicians say that rheumatism usually accompanies a complaint like mine. I hope to feel well soon. I am giving particular attention to myself now, and mean to be careful and only do what is absolutely necessary. * * *

We have had a sad accident here this week. On Tuesday two young men went out gunning. They went a mile from here, and one of them shot a squirrel; it lodged in a tree, and neither of them could climb well, but one undertook it, and the other assisted him in climbing by taking the butt end of his gun to raise him up, and holding the muzzle near his own side. The gun was loaded, and went off, discharging the contents in the side of the young man. He lived three minutes, and then bled to death. The blood passed from his side in great quantities, as large a stream or gush as a man's arm. He only said, 'Go quickly for the doctor,' and then in despair cried, 'I am a dead man,'—and died. He was carried to the coffee-house, where he had boarded for years, and there prepared for the grave. His remains were carried to the church, and Mr. W. preached a funeral discourse to a crowded assembly, from our Saviour's words, Matt. xxiv, 44, 'Be ye also ready,' etc. The services were very solemn and affecting. This young man was twenty-five years old; has left a widowed mother, four brothers, and two sisters, to mourn his early exit. How true that 'we know not what a day will bring forth.'

We postponed our prayer-meeting this afternoon on account of the funeral."

"Parting at death painful."—Letter of Mr. Webster.

"Sabbath, Nov. 17th. Delightful Sabbath. As I saw the multitudes going up to the Lord's house, I could not help wishing that I too could go up thither and pay my vows to the Lord. But I soon checked the desire, and remembered that God, who permitted others to enter his courts, saw fit for some wise reason to deprive me the privilege. I have had some profitable reflections to-day in view of my feeble state, and have indulged a little in melancholy feelings too. I find it difficult to prevent some anxious thoughts from rushing to my mind. My health is growing feeble every day; my disease, though still *unknown*, is I feel making progress. My strength is weakness, and I have some fears that I shall never be well. But my anxiety to-day is that I may be submissive to the will of the Lord, and be perfectly willing to lie in his hands, subject to his direction. I have felt to-day a great reluctance to die. The thought of being called to separate from my beloved husband, and of leaving father, mother, brothers, and sisters, is trying,—yes, 'tis overwhelming. May God's grace be imparted to me, and may I be sustained in all my trials."

The following is an extract from a letter of her husband's:—

"*Hopkinton, Nov.* 23, 1839.

MY DEAR PARENTS,—My dear Rebecca is unable to write you to-day, and I most cheerfully perform that office, as I know you are always anxious to hear from us. Yesterday was a very tedious day for Rebecca. Dr. Bucklin is convinced that her spine is affected, and has found it necessary to apply a caustic, which was on all day yesterday. * * * Now perhaps you may think it desirable to do something, or to get some advice that we have

A wakeful but happy night.—Pained at sickness of her brother.

not got. I feel that I need counsel, although I have no reason to doubt that Dr. Bucklin will do every thing that he thinks can be done for my dear Rebecca's relief. We cannot but hope that she will get relief soon. We will try every thing, and then try to be patient and submissive to the divine will, for we are dependant on a more than human arm to raise us up, and if it is best for us we shall be. Blessed assurance, that all things shall work together for good to them that love God."

In her journal she wrote:—

"Monday, 25th. Did not close my eyes to sleep last night till half past four o'clock. Suffered till two with pain; but had quite a happy night. Enjoyed my meditations, and could not avoid dwelling on the hymn, 'I asked the Lord that I might grow,' etc. It speaks the language of my heart."

"*Hopkinton, Nov.* 27, 1839.

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—I am bolstered up in bed to write you a few lines, for I choose to write so long as I can hold and guide my pen. I can best tell my own feelings, and I think it will give you more satisfaction than for me to write by proxy.

I am pained to hear of the ill health of my dear brother William. I am glad he is relieved a little from his cough. When Mr. W. wrote you yesterday, I was very comfortable, having rested well all night, which I have not done for a long time before. He was so pleased to see the change that he really thought I was going to get well immediately. Sabbath night I did not close my eyes to sleep till nearly five o'clock, suffering till two with acute pain in my arm and shoulder.

Weak as a child.—Letter of her mother.—Kindness of "Cousin P."

How often while on my bed, do I wish I had a mother, or sister, near enough to come and sit with me. It would tend much to my comfort. I know it is cold, and you have family cares, etc., and therefore I cannot ask you to come and see me, but I should be delighted to see you here, if you feel as if you can come. I think it would do me good, and I must say I should not be surprised if you should soon come to H. I think I am as comfortable as I could expect to be. For four days I was quite helpless; could not move myself in bed; and was unable to sit up at all unless lifted about like a child. I am able now to help myself considerable. I do not feel quite as comfortable as I did yesterday, but yet am more so than I have been any day but yesterday for a week. The caustic on my back was terrible. It burnt a deep place there, which is as *black* as *ink*, or as a *coal*, and was burning for *ten* hours, keeping me in an agony."

Her mother, then visiting her, under date of Dec. 4th, wrote:—

"I found Rebecca sitting up; they had just got up from the tea-table, and gone up in her room to have reading and prayer. Rebecca looks better than she did when I last saw her; she is better than she has been, but she suffers very much yet. * * * The pain is very much relieved, and if she is careful I hope she will soon be better. She has two excellent nurses. Mr. W.'s cousin devotes all her time to her, and M. is very kind and attentive. 'Cousin P.' I like very much; I think she is an excellent girl; she is very attentive to Rebecca, and seems as fond of her as if she was an own sister."

Her mother's arrival at Hopkinton.

"*Hopkinton, Dec.* 7, 1839.
Saturday, A. M.

MY DEAR FATHER,—As it is her birth-day, I wish a very happy new-year to my dear sister A. May she begin, continue, and end her twenty-first year happily and usefully. I have thought much of her this morning, and intended to address a letter to her, but mother desires me to write *for her* to-day, and I am very happy to do so. I need not say to you I am rejoiced to have my dear mother with me. She came somewhat unexpectedly to me. It would not have been unexpected had it not rained; but the tediousness of the storm led me to think she would not venture to start. I had just finished my supper when I heard the neighing of a horse at the door, and a boy's voice from the same quarter induced me to listen to hear the door open. I soon heard my mother's voice—yes, I heard the sound, 'How is *Rebecca?*' which I knew proceeded from no other lips than her's; for I hear no such sound in Hopkinton, except from the lips of my husband. I was more than *glad* to see her; I was *delighted;* and it will do me much good without doubt. She has probably given you an account of her ride, and her conveyance here from Upton.

We were glad to hear from you yesterday, and learn you were all well. I hardly know what to write respecting myself, for the fact is, I see so little change from day to-day, that I am at a loss to know what to write you. I am, on the whole, comfortable—considerably more so than I was a fortnight since—but I make very slow progress in gaining. My back is as comfortable as I can expect it to be. The sore is becoming more and more painful, which is considered *favorable.* It has already relieved my *old pain* considerably. My right arm has troubled me this

week, so that I have twice had it blistered, but as the blisters did not work well they are very painful. * * *

I remain, as ever, your affectionate daughter,

REBECCA."

" Sabbath, Dec. 8th. Very stormy day. Mr. W. has preached at home all day. This morning he preached to 'young men,' and this afternoon a funeral sermon in reference to Mr. Metcalf's death. I have been tolerably comfortable to-day. This has been a pleasant Sabbath *within*, though stormy without. I have been deeply interested in reading a new work entitled 'How to Live,'—a 'Memoir of Mrs. Catharine Watson.' I am humbled in reading such a book—in seeing how I *ought* to live, and knowing how I *do* live.

Dec. 14th. I am surprised at my leanness of soul. I seem to live daily as if I were never to die. My thoughts centre on earthly things. Strange that one so afflicted with disease and pain, should be so heedless, and careless, and destitute of all right feeling towards God. I feel that I am in a *sad state;* would that I felt it more and more, and that feeling it, I would repent and turn to God, the giver of all right and proper feelings.

My state of health is known only to such as reside with me, and upon whom devolves the care of ministering to my wants; for to occasional visiters, little comparatively of my feebleness and suffering is perceptible, because my *spirits* are generally good, and my looks do not much vary. I cannot complain constantly of my pains, for if I do that, I shall weary and distress all around me; besides I am a great admirer of cheerfulness in a sick person."

To her mother.—Dec. 21st.

* * * "Do you think you know how favored you are in being *well?* It is certainly an inestimable and invaluable gift—that of health. There is very little variation in my health. * * *

Mother W. is with us. She came very unexpectedly on Thursday evening. She is well, and desires much love to you and all the family. She came alone. She seems very kind and affectionate, and very unwilling to have me exert myself at all, or wait on myself." * * *

In her journal she also wrote:—

"We are nearly every day receiving new manifestations of the kindness of friends. Some token of remembrance is often presenting itself to our view. It is certainly a *kind Father* who disposes the hearts of friends and neighbors to open bountifully their hands to our comfort."

"*Hopkinton, Dec.* 28, 1839.

DEAR A.,—Your kind letter of the 2d instant, together with a short note of the 28th Sept., received by brother Charles, now lie before me; both of which were very gratefully received, and would have been earlier answered, had my health been sufficient. I doubt not, however, that you, having known my situation, have already pardoned the seeming neglect. It is a great source of pleasure to me, that I am able so frequently to hear from my friends, and to have assurances of their sympathies and their prayers,—both of which I greatly need. I thank you, dear A., for *your* sympathy in my sorrows and afflictions. I have reason to be unfeignedly thankful that my bitter cup is mixed with many mercies; and among the rest, is

that of love and Christian friendship. Many have *far heavier* afflictions than myself, with certainly less mitigation and fewer comforts. My visitations are lighter than I deserve. In the midst of my trials, I would not forget that the Lord never willingly afflicts; and if he wounds, he will support, and heal. I may safely leave myself in the hands of a Physician who is too wise to err, and too compassionate to wound, if there is not a *needs be*. My disease, which has been so long stationary, still confines me at home, and not only so, but to my room, and part of the time to my bed. Owing to the continued pain in my back and limbs, and to the loss of mental and of bodily vigor, I have fallen into a nervous state, which is to me distressing. Sometimes I think, 'if I may have some *vigor* of *mind*, then I will never complain under pain and weakness of body,' etc., which is no less than saying, let me *choose* my own trials, then I shall be satisfied. Self-choosing is I believe one of the hardest things to cure. God could, if it pleased him, give me a healthy mind in a sickly body; but if both are to be weakened together, it is my duty and wisdom to say, 'Even so, Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight.'

Some of our afflictions are medicinal, to check that worst of maladies, indwelling sin, or to prevent a relapse; and though at present they are not joyous, but grievous, we know not how much worse it might have been. Is it not an *honor* to be tried, to suffer for Christ's sake? So far as He enables us to support affliction with cheerful submission, patience, and hope—so far the post of *trial* is a post of honor. 'If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with him.' My sufferings, dear friend, are peculiar; while I appear in health, I am often undergoing the sharpest pains, known only to myself. To occasional visiters, little

Nervous irritability.—244th Village Hymn precious.

comparatively of my feebleness is perceptible, because my spirits are generally good, and my looks do not much vary. These sufferings, sad to say, make me sometimes impatient, sometimes irritable. They lead me to magnify trifles, and to be often anxious lest I become wearisome to those upon whom devolve the care of waiting upon me. Still I do feel the benefit of knowing that the *cause* of disturbance is chiefly in myself; that it is *disease* that gives weight to trifles, and I find it better to fall out with myself than with such things as I cannot alter. More than eight weeks have passed away since I took my chamber, during which time I have suffered much, yes, *severe* pain, as you have doubtless been apprized; and one might well suppose, my trials would be *sufficient*. I have often during a paroxism of pain exclaimed, 'What *severe trials* I need.' But I fear I need a sharper stroke yet, to give me a thorough rousing. Sometimes I think I must feel *death approaching*, before I in earnest set about preparing for it. I am amazed at myself! Some weeks since I spent a sleepless night. It was the *Sabbath* night. I retired at my usual hour, but sleep forsook me, until the early dawn of day. But the night did not seem tedious. I had a happy night. I felt that Jesus was near, and I was comforted. I enjoyed his presence, and cared not for sleep. I had then been enjoying for a little time sweet communion with God; had had a good day; and to be visited in the night watches by so dear a friend, even by him who styles himself our *elder brother*, was sweet to my soul. The 244th of the Village Hymns was constantly running in my mind through the night. Read it, dear A., *it expresses my feelings*. I sometimes do enjoy sweet peace in believing, and then I am in the slough of despond. I need much grace—much patience. I hope I am gradually gaining in

Her letters "too long,"—Inquires after her S. S. pupils of former years.

strength. I am very *comfortable*. I obtain more rest nights now, than heretofore. My appetite at times is good; rather variable however. But I will not go on to give you a minute detail. I have already gone far enough—have written more than my physician would allow me,—but I love to write to my friends, and oftener err, by writing *too long* than *too short* letters. I will add a little more before sealing the letter, but must stop now.

30th. Again am I seated with my writing utensils around me to finish my letter. Your letter afforded me much satisfaction. I have read and re-read it over and over again. I know the case of Mr. —— in the church must have been peculiarly grievous and afflictive. May the Lord sanctify it to the good of his flock.

I rejoice to hear that your health is so good as to enable you to engage in Sabbath-school instruction. Be faithful to your trust, my dear friend. Bear in mind, that you must by and by meet those immortals whom you instruct from Sabbath to Sabbath, at the bar of God. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' Am glad the school is flourishing. Are there any conversions? Where are Harriet, Ann Maria, and all the eight dear girls whom *I once instructed?* In the school, or where? Do they live for themselves, or for God? How are the young ladies' prayer-meetings now? Are there sixteen or eighteen who from week to week assemble in that consecrated spot, to ask God's blessing upon the church? Which of them cannot remember the time when she 'lifted up her voice and said, Jesus master, have mercy on me?' Her prayer being heard, and her leprosy cleansed, is she not *ready now* to turn back and glorify God, with a loud voice? I believe there were *many* cleansed from sin in that congregation, but where are they? Do few of them

return to give glory to God? To those who do not attend, I should like, could I see them, to call their attention to the seventeenth chapter of Luke, from the eleventh to the nineteenth verses. I think it would remind them of duty. The last meeting I attended was held in my room. It was a ladies' prayer-meeting, held eight weeks since. It was a very precious season, and I long to ——, I was going to say, I long to be able to attend one of these meetings again. But I do not feel anxious. If it is the Lord's will, I should love to. If not, I wish to feel perfectly resigned and willing he should rule. Friends here are very kind, and I have every reason for gratitude to God for all the manifestations of his love. How is Mary? I often think of her afflictions. I hope she and I may by and by come out of the furnace, thoroughly purified.

Remember me to all my dear friends. I shall be happy always to hear from you. Congratulate J. B. in my behalf, in view of her future prospects. May she be prepared for the high and solemn responsibilities of a clergyman's wife. My husband's health is good. He desires to be kindly remembered to you all. I must now close by adding my love, and wishing you, your mother, and sister, a 'happy new year.'

Ever your affectionate friend,

R. G. WEBSTER."

"*Hopkinton, Dec.* 31, 1839.
Tuesday morning.

Parents, Brothers, Sisters, dear,
I wish you *all* a 'happy year.'

This day closes the year. Twelve months have passed away since I bade farewell to the home of my childhood and youth, to seek a home in a new place, and among

Solemn at close of the year, for several reasons.

strangers; but not 'unbefriended nor alone,'—for I had the friend of my choice to accompany me. What a sad day was that on which I left the paternal roof! How sadly we all felt. It was not because I did not expect to be happy that I was sad; nor was it because *you* were opposed to my marriage that *you* were sad. But it was because we had lived happily together, and it was trying to be separated. A breach—yes, the *third* breach was about to be made in our happy family circle.

Well, the year has rolled round. Death has not entered our circle as yet, though it has stared some of us in the face. Let us recount the mercies of the Lord, and give glory to his name. He hath given us food to eat, clothing to wear, habitations to dwell in, and friends to enjoy. He hath fed us from his table, and clothed us from his vestry. Let us 'give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever.'

In closing this year, I feel solemn,—for several reasons. I feel that I have been an unprofitable servant to my Master. 'I have done that which I ought not to have done, and have neglected that which it was my duty to do.' I have done very little to save souls; have been inconsistent as a Christian, and as a minister's wife. I know that the accounts of the year are sealed up for the *judgment*. How solemn! Again, I feel solemn in view of my state of health. I am aware that my health is precarious; never has it been so much so. I know I ought to be affected in view of it, and it should be my chief concern to be prepared for God's will concerning me.

To my parents, brothers, and sisters, who profess to love the Lord, let me say, do begin the year with God; renew your covenant; consecrate anew your faculties to God's service. Be more diligent, and watch unto prayer. Soon

Cannot after this "write by *every mail*."

the night of death cometh, when no man can work. Live as expectants of heaven. Live as redeemed sinners. Let all around you, all who see you, know that you are Christians. May we all so live this year, that should any of us be summoned at the bar of God, we can bear witness, each of the other, that we are living to God's glory, and doing good on the earth.

Mr. W. is well, and desires much love. We have both realized the kind wishes bestowed on us by so many of our friends on new-year's day and evening. We have had a *very happy year*. I will let you hear often from me, but think not as often as heretofore. I shall not attempt to write by *every mail*—I may possibly by every *other* mail; and if a week sometimes passes without your hearing, you must not feel anxious. You shall hear, *if possible*, once a week at least.

I am quite at a loss to know what to write respecting my health. I do not know that I am worse, nor can I perceive that I am better. I am some days more comfortable than I am others; but whether my disease is really better or not I cannot tell.

And now, my dear father, mother, brothers, and sisters, I must close—thanking you all for your letters the past year, and all other expressions of kindness. I have written without stopping and am weary.

That you may all have a *very happy* new year; that you may begin, continue, and end it with God,—is the prayer of your very affectionate daughter and sister,

REBECCA G. WEBSTER."

"Tuesday evening, Dec. 31, 1839. The year is about closing. It is a solemn thing to draw to the close of a month, much more so a year. It has been an eventful

year to me. I have assumed the responsibilities of a wife. We have as husband and wife lived happily together for a year. It has been the happiest year of my life. I have also become a house-keeper. We have been prospered during the year. The Lord has been very kind and merciful,—slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. Sickness has been my lot for more than a third of the time, but yet the Lord has been very good. I have been as the barren fig-tree,—have borne no fruit to God's glory. 'Spare me yet another year, oh Lord, and try me!'

I have written one hundred and twenty letters this year, and received one hundred and seven."

CHAPTER XV.

SKETCHES OF CHARACTER AND EFFORTS IN 1840.

"Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1840. Spared to commence a new year, I desire to consecrate myself to the service of the only living and true God. I commence it under solemn circumstances. I am ill—quite so. Many of my symptoms are unfavorable. Death may be sowing in me the seeds of dissolution, and peradventure I may now have commenced the last year of my life. 'Thou Lord knowest.'

One year has now passed since I left the paternal roof, and was united in marriage to the man of my choice. Happily has the year passed. We have realized the kind

wishes of many, who saluted us on our bridal evening, and had not sickness been my portion for the last four months, I should have had but little to mar my happiness. But God saw that I needed some chastisement, and he sent it in mercy—not in anger. I feel that I have not had one pain that I did not need."

To her parents—Jan. 1st.

"Just one year, at this hour, I was married. I have been thinking a good deal to-day about that festal occasion, and was happy in the thought that you all remembered me, for I know I have not been forgotten to-day.

It has been my privilege to wish all our family 'happy new year' before they thought of it. I have followed my usual custom, of distributing new-year's presents to all around me. To each I gave a trifling gift, and wish I could do the same to you and all at home. Mr. Webster has this afternoon decided to go to Providence early to-morrow morning; and, situated as I am, I cannot procure any thing to send, for first, I cannot go out to *look* for any thing; second, if I could, I should *find nothing* at either store worth sending to the city; third, I have not *time* to do any thing of that sort to *night*. So you must take 'the will for the deed.' I'll send my love to you all for a new-year's present."

"Friday, 3d. Had a visit from our good deacon M. this evening. He conversed solemnly, and prayed with me. I have had a season of profitable reflection to-day. I have attended to family prayers yesterday and to-day, in my husband's absence. Was assisted by God.

Mr. W. returned this evening. Left P. at half past one o'clock. All my friends are in comfortable health. They

sent me several tokens of their kind feelings and wishes for the opening year. May the Lord bless and reward them.

Saturday, 4th. I have had more spiritual enjoyment to-day than usual. But the world has too firm a grasp upon my affections. It keeps me from my Saviour. Oh, for an humble and holy love for the dear Redeemer.

Sabbath, 5th. Have been reading some fragments of sermons of Rev. Richard Cecil to-day, and also some of Dr. Payson's Thoughts. Have been very comfortable yesterday and to-day. Feel grateful to God for this mercy. Mr. W. has preached a new-year's sermon this afternoon. He said the congregation were very solemn."

To her parents.—From Mr. W.—Jan. 7th.

"I see Rebecca has her writing materials and *four letters* before her, each of which she thinks she *must answer* in all its detail, which I could not *think* of her doing. She thought she must make *particular* mention of every item therein mentioned, and express her *particular gratitude* for *every favor* received. I have told her you would none of you wish her to do all this, and that it would quite satisfy you all if she would thank you all in the gross, and I have begged of her the opportunity of writing myself."

"Jan. 10th. Mr. and Mrs. D. E. called here this afternoon. Had a pleasant visit from them. Mrs. E. inquired kindly about my state of mind. I was rejoiced to have her do it. Very few talk to me about my hope beyond this world. Mrs. E. made a remark which impressed me, as she was leaving my bed-side, viz. 'Try to feel contented, and feel *as willing* to be sick as *not*.' An important suggestion."

A wood-cutters' party at their minister's wood-pile.

To her brother C.—Jan. 15th.

"We have had a new kind of a party here to-day—one of 'wood-cutters.' We had intimation Monday evening that some were intending to 'turn out' to-day and cut up our wood for us. We had a pile of about four loads, or *cords*, lying in the yard. I thought they would earn a good dinner, and we had arrangements made to-day for dinner for about a dozen men—a fire in the parlor, and all things ready. Mr. W. was out of town, and at eleven o'clock I sent for one of the gentlemen—they were all young men of our church—to come up stairs. I then gave or sent an invitation to them all to dine here, saying our dinner was prepared, and I should insist on their staying. Just as the bell rung for twelve, all but one went home. The girls tried to have every thing orderly and nice, and it was a great disappointment to us all. The young men lived near to us, and they each preferred going home. They seemed to be very happy in their work. I could hear them talking and laughing, and was pleased with their shrewdness. * * *

What a terrible story about the 'Lexington's' being burnt. It affects my heart deeply. I bless the Lord that neither of my beloved parents, brothers, or sisters were on board. It is the most shocking thing I have heard this long time, if *ever before*. Oh, the friends of the perished ones! Dreadful—oh dreadful. Think of the alternatives, to be *burned* or *drowned*. What a solemn providence is this; how loudly it speaks to all to prepare for death, so that if suddenly summoned to appear before God, we may stand prepared."

"25th. P. W. has for the last fortnight been in quite an interesting state of mind. She is now earnestly inquiring after truth. I have some conversation every day with her. Have conversed some time with her this evening. I trust she will soon yield her heart to God. I don't know what to say to her. I am afraid, lest I give a wrong direction to her mind. May the Lord teach me what to say, and teach her her duty. I trust the Lord is near to this place, and ready to bless us. Christians are awaking, and some sinners are beginning to attend evening meetings, and look solemn. May the Lord guide us in the path of duty, and save souls here for his name sake."

"*Jan. 25th.*

Dear sister, the Lord is graciously permitting us to see a 'little cloud' arising—even as 'large as a man's hand.' His Spirit I feel is hovering over our town. The church are awaking from their slumbers. The minister is also revived. There is a *general* awakening in the church in all parts of the town. A few weeks since we had a fast. There was a meeting at eleven for prayer, etc. The meeting was full. *Public* confessions were made—and some confessions like this. Deacon —— arose and turned to a brother and said, 'Brother ——, you and I have been at variance,' etc. etc., 'now let us settle here—and freely forgive, and live and act as brothers, and as Christians.' Mr. —— arose, and with tears confessed his sin, and he and deacon —— became reconciled on the spot. The example was followed by others, and the season was a melting one."

"Sabbath, Jan. 26th. I have had a good Sabbath day. Had a spirit of prayer for myself, my husband, my cousin

Censorious.—No excuse.—Feels her nothingness.—Solitude refreshing.

P., and the congregation as they were assembled to hear the truth. More freedom than usual in prayer. Have felt solemn to-day, particularly so, in reflecting upon the case of P., with whom I doubt not the Holy Spirit is now striving. I feel very unworthy to have God come into our family, and save a soul—and though I much desire and long for her conversion, I feel that it would be a great condescension for God to come and grant us so great a blessing.

Feb. 7th. We have a temperance lecturer here with us—Mr. ——, who arrived here Thursday, and will spend several days with us. He has to-day been to visit the 'coffee-house,' and one of our stores, where intoxicating liquors are sold. He has been laboring with those who thus deal out what he called 'liquid poison of hell.' I *hope* he will do good here.

Have been indulging of late in a censorious spirit somewhat respecting ——, which I ought not to have done. I am very sorry in view of it. I will try to bridle my tongue henceforth. May God forgive me. I am without excuse. * * *

A good Baptist sister spent an hour or two here this morning,—and Mrs. B., another Baptist, spent an hour or two this evening. It gratified me to see these friends.

Feb. 9th. I *feel* my nothingness. My heart is very full of sin. I fear *all* my motives to action for God are sinful. 'If I love, why am I thus?' I fear I never knew any thing of religion,—and yet I have some feelings which I cannot think belong to the unrenewed soul. My health is so much improved that I prevailed on the family to go to church and leave me alone this afternoon. I enjoyed myself. I have so little time to be alone, that I lose my relish for prayer, and am obliged to be irregular in per-

forming the duty, and often do it without any life, or animation, or feeling. This afternoon I esteemed it a privilege to call upon God. Had a spirit of prayer for myself, and for my husband,—and also for the outpouring of God's Spirit in this place. I do desire to see a revival of religion in this town.

Deacon M. very kindly sent me a letter to-day, inquiring into my religious state, etc. I hope it will do me good. I trust this has been a profitable day.

Feb. 19th. Mr. Crosby, Agent of the Mass. Temperance Society, is with us to-day. He met the children with their parents this afternoon, and talked an hour to them on temperance. This evening he has delivered a calm, dispassionate, and argumentative lecture in the church,—one calculated to do much good. I hope it will produce a good effect.

Thursday, 20th. Mr. Crosby's lecture last evening produced a fine impression. After the lecture, Mr. —— and Mr. —— went to see the Secretary of the Temperance Society, and gave their names to the total abstinence pledge. They said they dared not put it off till to-day, lest they should drink again. They have been notorious tipplers. Mr. C. called last evening for volunteers to go to every family in each of the districts here, to get subscribers to the Temperance Journal. One of the first who volunteered his services was a man of notoriously intemperate habits. He called here with his paper. Had got about thirty subscribers, and said he should do his best to get *one hundred.* Mr. W. advised *him* to go and put his *name* to the *temperance pledge.*

Friday, 21st. I have been engaged to-day in preparing a few facts to send to Boston for the 'Friend of Virtue.' Am quite weary to-night.

Young ladies' prayer-meeting commenced.—Remembers the sailor still.

Saturday, 22d. Just three years to-day since my first introduction to Mr. W.; how little did I think of the result of that call he made at my father's.

I wrote to Mrs. P., of Amherst, this morning—and have spent most of the afternoon on my bed; felt quite unwell to-day.

This afternoon a 'young ladies' prayer-meeting' was commenced here. There were five present. Mr. W. went down and addressed them, and prayed with them.

We have had some profitable conversation in the family circle this evening. May it do us all good.

Extracts from other letters in February.

"Now, dear brother William, I want to hear from you soon. Write me particularly about your *health*. I have felt quite concerned about you. I was fearful at one time that you were doomed to a premature grave. How would you meet the summons of death? Oh, be entreated now, 'while the lamp holds out to burn,' to come and offer yourself to Jesus. Be wise for yourself, and come to him who says, 'Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.' Mr. Webster unites with me in much love to you.

Believe me, as ever, your affectionate sister,

R. G. WEBSTER."

To her sister E.

"I am rejoiced to hear such favorable news from the Bethel Society. Thank you for being so explicit. It is all interesting to me—particularly that you have obtained ——'s house, and are soon to move the boarding-house. It is a grand stand, and I doubt not will be just the thing

Tedious length of a temperance lecturer's *stay* in H.

for the society. I wish heartily that —— would consent to take it, even for one year. As to ——'s giving up her office, I was not surprised,—but I am sorry she does not feel her obligation to the poor *sailor*. But some *wont* feel, and you cannot drive them to feel. Hope —— will be more faithful, and give more general satisfaction. The letter from the sailor, to which you alluded, I should love to read. How much cause for gratitude have the society, if they have in any way, directly or indirectly, been instrumental of blessing *one soul*. Do they feel their indebtedness to God for crowning their labors? I am *sorry* it becomes necessary for you to resign your office. I have hoped you could keep it, but I cannot say any thing to encourage it; you best know your own business. I fear the ladies who promise to do your walking, will forget after the annual meeting their promises. I should think —— could take it for you.

I was glad to hear a word from the Missionary Society; hope they will raise $200 this year."

"*Feb. 29th.*

You inquired, dear father, about a certain temperance agent, how we liked him, etc. Well, we became rather tired of him. He staid in town nearly a *fortnight*, and most of the time was *here*. He is very dependant on others, being very lame. He cannot help himself much. Mr. W. was quite tied down to him, having always to harness and unharness his horse, feed him, etc.—that is the *horse*. He could hardly walk about the house, and not at all out of doors. He is a widower, with one child, and he took a wonderful fancy to one of the family, called her '*cousin*' altogether, very familiarly too. Every evening he had a terrible head-ache, he said, and then he wanted her to

bathe his head with camphor for more than half an hour at a time. She mended him a coat, out of charity, for he was very poor and quite ragged,—and none of us liked to have him look so. When she had mended *one*, he liked the work so well, he wanted her to mend another. I should not be surprised if he should come again to see the effect his last visit had upon her. He is a '*harum-scarum*' lecturer, and I think did more hurt than good in town. He lectured only once in the church, and Calvin says he would not admit him again into the pulpit. He stirred up the people here, and raised quite a commotion, so that C. got Mr. C., the State agent, to come here last week to get the people calmed down. Mr. C.'s visit here produced quite a happy impression, and things are calmed down, and *temperance gains ground*,—so that good may come out of evil.

I was surprised to hear Mr. —— had decided to go to Europe. I think it will be as well for him *to go*, however, considering the circumstances under which they are placed. I never heard before *but* that his *health* was *very good*. The next thing I expect you'll hear will be that *Calvin* is ill, and the doctor *advises* his taking a voyage to Europe. If so I hope he'll *advise somebody to pay his expenses*, and also *advise my* accompanying him. I hope Mr. —— will not leave his church also. I am glad to hear there is any interest in High-street church, and hope they and all the other churches will soon enjoy an outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

"Sab., Mar. 15th. I am reminded, by the return of the 15th of March, that another year has passed since my dear husband received the vestments of the holy ministry. This is the third anniversary of his ordination. Then he

anticipated spending his days in Russia, as a chaplain to American seamen; but God has seen fit to alter those plans, and has in his providence stationed him here as the pastor of this flock. Oh, that he would make him an eminently *holy minister*, and make me a help to him. He has preached at home all day, on the 'pleasures of religion.' I have been reading from 'Wilberforce's Practical View.' Am weary to-night, after reading all day, and can hardly sit down to read again.

Tuesday, 24th. Since writing last I have been sick. A week to-day I was very ill,—burning fever. For a few days I was quite apprehensive that it might be my last sickness, and endeavored to search my heart and see if I were prepared to make such a change as might await me. I requested my husband to examine me closely, and see if he could find evidence satisfactory of my being a Christian. I trust it was an examination honestly and candidly made. The result is, I find my hopes are fixed on the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour and Redeemer of men. I think I can say 'Whom not having seen, I love,—and who, though now I see him not yet believing, I rejoice,' with my heart I trust.

My fever formed a crisis on the fifth day, at which time I had a very bad turn. I am now quite comfortable; can sit up half an hour in the morning, and half an hour in the evening."

"*April* 1*st.*

DEAR E.,—This *is* a 'world of sin.' How difficult to live near the Saviour. I have felt much grieved in relation to your dear pastor, and I enter most fully into the feelings of the church. It came to me like a thunderbolt, and how must the church have felt at the meeting when it

was announced. It must have been a solemn meeting. We thank you for giving us such full information respecting it."

"April 2d. On the 21st of March received letters from P. One contained sad intelligence. It was that my late pastor, Rev. Mr. Folsom, of High-street church, Providence, had been, on the 19th of March, dismissed from his pastoral charge for a very *trying* reason—viz: that he had become a Unitarian. It seems he has ever since he has been in the ministry had perplexing doubts of the doctrine of the Trinity,—and these doubts having increased greatly the last eight months, he has been led 'to investigate the subject thoroughly,' to use his own language. In a communication to the church on the 19th ult., he says, 'I find myself in a confirmed rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity as contained in your creed, and in the creeds of all orthodox Christians.' This is painful to the church in the extreme. I was very ill when the letter came, and it was withheld from me for a few days; but when I read it I was overcome. It brought tears to my eyes, and pain to my heart. But the Lord who has permitted him thus to renounce his truth, is able to turn him again as the rivers of water are turned, or indeed to overrule it for his own glory.

I have not felt happy or comfortable in my mind to-day. I have been inclined to be fretful and peevish. Oh Lord forgive me, and be thou my comforter.

Sabbath, April 5th. The family are all at church. I am a prisoner still to my chamber, 'never less *alone*, than when alone.' God's children here will to-day commemorate the Saviour's death. May they be prepared for it. This privilege has long been denied me. I have not been

General interest in religion.

to church for more than five months. I sometimes feel anxious to worship God in his courts, but I know I ought not to be anxious; he knows what is best for me. I feel that there is great reason to bless God for the present cheering state of religion in this town. Ever since the middle of November there has been apparently some attention to the great subject. The church then began to be revived, and the interest has increased gradually till the present time. There seems now to be a *general* interest. The church are decidedly more awake than I ever saw them before; they are solemn; and there seems to be a spirit of prayer among them. The impenitent are solemn; they attend church regularly, and are willing to be conversed with.

M. staid at home with me this evening, and I have conversed solemnly and I think faithfully with her about her soul. She was much affected, wept, and seemed ready to converse. She says her mind has been unusually impressed of late, particularly since last Sabbath. The conversation of Mr. Smith who was here, affected her—likewise his preaching; and Mr. W. tells me she was affected in church this afternoon. I hope we may soon see her a decided Christian.

Monday, 6th. I have felt quite a spirit of prayer to-day, particularly that God would prepare my husband to converse faithfully with those who might be disposed to accept his invitation of yesterday to come here this evening to have personal conversation with him about their souls.

Saturday, 18th. Several young ladies called in to see me after their prayer-meeting this afternoon. There was some little confusion attending their calling, which prevented me from having some personal conversation with ——, who was here, and to whom I designed making some

remarks. She is young and diffident, and I did not think it wise to make any pointed remarks to her.

Sabbath, 19th. The latter part of the day I enjoyed considerably. I had personal conversation with M., who was much affected, and seemed glad to be conversed with. She is in quite an interesting state of mind, and I hope will soon be a Christian. She requested me to make her a subject of special prayer, that she 'might immediately be a decided Christian.'

Monday, 20th. Miss —— and M——, and S—— called. I conversed personally with each. Miss —— is a member of the church and is enjoying religion. M. is much interested about her soul,—was affected. S. careless. Mrs. —— came this evening to the study for personal conversation.

"*April 24th.*

I am rejoiced, my dear mother, to hear you are having such interesting meetings; that they are so well attended, and that some have come out from the world, and made Jesus their best friend. Truly the Lord is merciful. What a happy beginning of 1840 he has given us. Our ears are daily made to hear of a revival of his work in some place. I rejoice to hear of the hopeful conversion of the daughters of Dr. T., the sons of Mrs. F., and the children of Mrs. D.,—and indeed all the names you mentioned. May the number be greatly multiplied. I should love to attend some of your good meetings with you. I often think how many there are who *shut themselves out* from these privileges, when others are *laid aside* by illness and *cannot go*. It is right that I should be situated as I am, but I do sometimes long to go to the house of God. I thirst, yes, and hunger too, to go up to the courts of the

"A gardening bee."—Ladies' Missionary Society.—$100.

Lord. I hope we may be able all to rejoice in seeing our dear —— giving herself to God. Tell her if she had been shut up in a room for six long months, and *could not* go to the sanctuary, she would begin to feel as if it would be a privilege again to sit with the worshipping assembly. I long to see her a decided Christian. I hope A. W. is thinking seriously about her soul. I hope she will be led to the Saviour of sinners and be pardoned.

We had quite a party to dine. We had three or four months ago a 'sawing-wood bee,'—and to-day we had a 'gardening bee.' Four or five of the good brethren of the church came here this morning with their oxen, ploughs, harrow, and spades, to help Calvin make his garden. It was a very unexpected favor. They rendered him essential service, and we provided a dinner for them, of which they all partook with a good relish, and seemed to enjoy it."

"Thursday, 7th. The Ladies' Missionary Society met here this afternoon. I was able to be present and conduct the meeting. We had twenty-two present. We voted unanimously to raise $100 this year to aid the American Board. We purpose to call on every female member of the church, and such others as are friendly to the missionary cause, and invite them to join the Society; and if they object to joining, ask them to give a donation. We have had three hundred cards printed, entitled 'For Eternity,' to distribute. These we shall present to every brother of the church, as well as sister. Two years ago the society raised $24,—one year ago $59,—and this year they will raise, God helping them, $100. Our meeting was very interesting. We had three or four prayers, and much conversation respecting the missionary cause. I read from

'Dr. Nevins' Practical Thoughts,' a chapter entitled, 'I will give liberally,' and one, 'An example of liberality,' in connection with the eighth and ninth chapter of 2 Cor., with apparently good effect."

In a letter of May 10th, to her parents, she wrote:—

"I rejoice to hear that the interest in your congregation continues. It remains *stationary* here. The interest seems neither to *increase* nor *diminish*. No news. Politics run high, and engross all the attention."

"Sabbath, May 17th. Through the mercy of God, I have been graciously permitted to go up to the courts of the Lord to-day. I have gained so fast of late, that I ventured to try my strength by *riding* to church this morning—after being confined at home for *seven months*. It was indeed good, and I enjoyed the privilege, and was cordially met by some of our good brethren and sisters. The Lord be praised for permitting me, after so long an absence from his house, to again worship with his people. The effort has not made me sick, though it fatigued me very much. I trust I shall experience no disadvantage from it."

To her sister.—May 29th.

"I am grieved to learn of the severe illness of our dear brother William. I learned to-day, by a note from father, that he was so feeble that Capt. R. feared he would not feel able to embark in the Lexington. I earnestly hope he may. I have been very anxious about him of late, and am pained to think of him as being among strangers, sick, far from all who are near and dear to him. I could not but

say to C. when he read to me father's note, 'I should much rather bear the sickness *myself* than have him bear it.' But I know it is all right, and wisely ordered by the Judge of all the earth, who will do rightly. I should love to administer to his wants and necessities. I doubt not that Capt. R. attends to having every thing done for him that can be; but a father, mother, brother, or sister, would be so happy to wait upon him, that I very much wish he could be permitted to return safely to Providence, and have all needful attentions. I feel extremely anxious about him, and hope to hear more favorable intelligence by the next mail. I hope to hear by every mail at present. It has affected me very much, and I find it difficult to refrain from constant weeping. If he had the consolations of religion now in this his hour of trial, how much he would be sustained, and how much should we all rejoice. * * *

There was a little boy of six years old in our neighborhood who was burnt to death yesterday by his clothes taking fire."

"May 30th. Can it be that I am *never* to see my dear brother again? Did I, when I left him at Upton on the 27th of last September, look upon him for the last time? God knows. But I do hope I may be permitted to see him again. Spare him, oh Lord, I beseech thee. Permit him to return to Providence,—and if he must *die*, let him die among his dear friends, and not in a strange land, among strangers, with no *dear friend* to close his eyes. Nevertheless, not *my will* but thine be done. But do, oh Lord, convert him from the error of his ways."

June 5. That which I feared has come upon me. I have just received a letter from brother Charles, containing the mournful intelligence that my dear brother William

Death of her brother William at St. Joseph's, Florida.

breathed his last at St. Joseph's, Florida, on the 19th of May. Brother G. transcribed a letter from Capt. R., brother William's partner in business, giving some particulars of his sickness. He is cut down in the vigor of manhood; just thirty years old; died in a strange land, among strangers; but God has ordered it, and he knows what is best. Oh that we may be disposed to trust the Lord though he smite us. It would have been a great consolation to us all if he could have been spared to return to Providence and die among his friends,—but may we not murmur,—it is all right,—God has done it. That it may be sanctified to us all is my earnest prayer. Death is never welcome to our dwellings, to our family circles. We have great reason, as a family, to be grateful that our ranks have so long remained unbroken. Twelve years are passed since death entered our borders, and removed a little sister of a few weeks old. Never before has it come and taken an adult from our circle. Let us remember our mercies as well as our afflictions. Oh that we may all rightly improve the event, and be made holier thereby.

June 13th. At two o'clock C. and I started from Providence for home. We took Franklin on our way, and called on Rev. Dr. Emmons. He appeared gratified to see us, and it afforded us much pleasure to see him. He is an *eminent divine*, and has attained a very great age. From Franklin we came to West Medway, twenty-five miles from Providence, to pass the Sabbath. C. is to exchange with Rev. Dr. Ide. We arrived here at eight o'clock; were cordially received by Mrs. Ide. She is the daughter of Dr. Emmons. We found Rev. Mrs. Torrey, her daughter, at her house, and glad to meet us.

15th. Have passed the time at Mrs. Ide's very pleasantly. Left them at eight o'clock this morning. Called

at Rev. Mr. Edwards' in Medway, and Rev. Mr. Storrs' in Holliston, and arrived home safely at twelve o'clock. Glad to reach our own home again, though we have only been absent a week."

She wrote to her parents on the same day:—

"We called upon the great and good Dr. Emmons of Franklin, who has entered upon his ninety-sixth year. He is weak and feeble though in comfortable health for one of his age. We were introduced into his study, where for sixty-seven years he has spent his time. He had occupied *one seat*, and the carpet was quite thin under his feet, and a square of newer carpet very plainly showed that it had already been mended. Every thing looked antique. He is a very agreeable, social man, and withal very shrewd. As we entered his study, he looked upon us, and said, 'Who'se all this, who be you?' On being told, he said, 'Did I ever see you before?' No sir. 'Well then, I believe you are to blame.' He is very fond of company, especially that of young ministers. He was very pleasant; says he is ready to depart now, at the Lord's bidding. He says he believes he is the oldest minister in the *world*. I was much gratified in seeing him, and hope again to have the pleasure of meeting him.

I cannot now realize that I have been to Providence. It seems like a dream, and when I think of the painful circumstances under which we met and parted, I find my heart filled with sorrow and sadness. I was asked this morning how many brothers and sisters I had,—and the question came so unexpectedly that I could scarcely answer,—for until then I had always been happy to say *two brothers* and *three sisters*,—now I must say *one* brother, and I cannot write of it but with tears and a heavy heart."

To her parents—June 19th.

"It seems to me very pleasant here. The stillness is favorable to reflection, and I try to benefit by our recent affliction. How consoling that we have something beside *human nature* to sustain us in this hour of trial. May the Lord sanctify it to us all, and may we give evidence that it has done us good. I have been able to test the value of religion the past winter and spring, and *now* it affords me much comfort."

"Sabbath, 21st. Rev. Mr. Storrs is with us to-day, from Holliston, in exchange with my husband. He has given us good sermons, and I have been permitted to go all day. This morning it was on the 'promises of God.' First, spoke of the Promisor; second, the nature of the promises; and third, the certainty of their fulfilment. This afternoon he preached 'on spirituality of mind.' I have enjoyed the Sabbath more than usual. This evening had religious conversation with M. Her mind is much impressed and solemn. Her serious impressions were revived under Mr. Sawtell's sermon on Friday evening. Endeavored to be faithful to her."

To her brother and sister.—June 22d.

"I am sure none can feel as mother feels, for whose love is like the mother's love? I wish I could be near enough to you to see you and *help* to comfort you and all our dear family; but my heart has been pierced too, and I should be a miserable comforter. How keen is this trial. It is a severe, a heavy affliction. I sit alone a great deal, and dwell upon the sad event, and try to profit by it. I think

there is a *great deal of meaning* in afflictions, and it becomes us to inquire why *we are thus afflicted.* There is a reason—and God knows it, though we do not. I hope to be made better by it, and it is my earnest prayer that we may all experience spiritual benefit from it. It is a mysterious providence. We shall know at the judgment the reason of it. Let us, dear brother and sister, seek to make a proper application of it to our own hearts. In my solitude I shed many and bitter tears over this trial. I cannot refrain from it. I did not know how much I loved my brother, till God came and took him away. But he has done it in wisdom, and we have no reason to complain, and say to him why do ye so?"

To her father.—June 23*d.*

"It becomes us all to make a proper improvement of the event, and try to live to God's glory. How soon we shall follow William! I little thought last winter I should survive him, but so God has ordered it, and in his wisdom we are made to mourn. Rather than weep and mourn for him who has gone, let us cast ourselves on God, and by faithful and prayerful means seek to be made better and holier Christians."

"*June* 26, 1840.

In the Taunton cars.

MY DEAR FATHER,—Just ready to start for Nantucket, and the bell is ringing,—but I will scratch a line, for I see J. W. in the cars, and he says he shall be in Providence tomorrow, and I can send by him. C. was going to Nantucket to spend the Sabbath, and I thought as he was so anxious to have me go with him I would improve the opportunity, and trust the *ride* and *sail* will be beneficial to me."

"Monday, 29th. Rode eight or ten miles around Nantucket with Calvin. There is a great deal of novelty about N. We may ride miles upon the island without seeing a tree or bush. All the trees and bushes are imported, and there are but few there. It is a sandy place, but quite pleasant.

Last evening we visited the Athenæum in Nantucket, where we saw splendid paintings, by Boudett, a French artist, of the Prodigal Son. There were two paintings. One represented the prodigal just resolved to return to his father, confess his sins, etc.; the other represented him as in his father's presence, surrounded by the servants, one putting on the scarlet robe, another the shoes, and a third the ring. The father's countenance was benign and lovely, and the son's indicative of the utmost contrition. The pictures were splendid, and well calculated to produce a fine impression.

Thursday, July 9th. This afternoon we have had an interesting meeting of ladies here. The class in the Sabbath-school which was under my care, as long as I had health adequate to teach, contributed regularly a small sum each Sabbath for the benefit of seamen, until the collection amounted to $5, and my ill health prevented my attendance longer. Mrs. P. F.'s former class have also met occasionally during the year, and by their industry have raised $10, which they appropriated to making Mr. Webster a life member of the Mass. Sabbath-school Society. These two classes have now come together and proposed to unite and organize a Society for the benefit of seamen, and invite all other ladies in the congregation who are disposed, to join. We had twenty-six ladies present this afternoon. I read some interesting intelligence to the ladies respecting seamen and the general cause, and we

then proceeded to organize the society. We adopted a constitution and call the society, 'Ladies' Bethel Association."

July 12th. This day I am twenty-six years old. This calls for self-examination. In taking a review of the past year, how great the catalogue of mercies. The year has been *crowned* with mercies; but I have seen days of trial and affliction too. The Lord has chastised me. During almost the whole of the year I have been afflicted with disease; much of the time a severe sufferer; but God has mercifully given skill to my physician, and efficacy to the means used, and I am now *comparatively well.* I am decidedly better than I have been for a year, and I have strong hope of again enjoying good health. Twice since last fall I have been brought to the verge of the grave, and viewed eternity very near. I am able now to bear moderate exercise, and to go to church regularly on the Sabbath; but cannot yet endure walking without injury. The Lord has also come near to me of late, in removing from me a very dear brother. He has called the eldest of our family into eternity. It is a severe affliction, but it is our Father who has afflicted, and may we be submissive to his will. I do earnestly desire that this event may be sanctified to our spiritual good.

These lines, selected from Mrs. Sigourney's Poems, were copied by Mrs. Webster into her journal at this time:—

'Dear (brother,) is it so? And shall I see
Thy face on earth no more? And didst thou breathe
The last sad pang of agonizing life
Upon a stranger's pillow? No kind hand
Of parent or of sister near, to press
Thy throbbing temples, when the shuddering dew
Stood thick upon them? Would it had been my lot
But with one weeping prayer to gird thy heart
For its last conflict.'

Religious feelings revived.—Enjoys preaching.

I have great cause for gratitude to God for *my blessings*, and especially for so far restoring my health, and now may I evince my gratitude to Him by living to his glory.

Rev. Mr. Coburn of Newfane, Vt., has preached two excellent sermons to us to-day,—this morning on the 'Faithfulness of God,' and this afternoon from the text, 'Unto one he is a savor of death unto death.'

Saturday, July 25th. I think I do feel a *little* revived. My heart, which is so full of sin, has been more open to my view within a few days than it has been, and I hope the Spirit of God is near, to revive and invigorate and bless my soul. Oh for a perfect view of my own sinfulness, and a disposition to forsake it and turn unto the Lord.

Sabbath, 26th. I have had a good day; better than for some time past. My dear husband has preached two solemn, practical sermons. This morning from Jer. v, 26, 'Among my people are found wicked men.' He showed us that, in all ages there had been some wicked men among God's people—in his church militant. I listened with unusual interest, and I hope with profit to it. This afternoon his text was from Jer. xvii, 9, 'Desperately wicked.' The church were stopped after the meeting this afternoon, and exhorted by my husband, deacons M. and F., to sustain the regularly appointed meetings, which have of late been much neglected. I attended a conference this evening at the meeting-house, which is the first I have attended for nine months. I esteemed it a great privilege."

Attends church again three times.—Kind assistance.—Accident.

To her father.—July 28th.

"Last Sabbath I was, through the goodness of God, permitted to go to church *three* times, which I have not before done for about ten months. The third service was at six o'clock, so that I did not go out *in the evening*. I have yet felt no inconvenience from it, and trust I shall not. I walked to all the meetings, and back again,—so you can judge by that of the state of my health. Yesterday Calvin and I rode over to the Springs, where I had not been since I went with you and mother last year. We had a fine ride.

I hope you will learn particularly the state of mind in which my dear brother left the world. *That most* concerns me, and while we know that God can change the heart, even at the eleventh hour, it would be cheering to hear that William was prepared and willing to die. How much grace we need, my dear father, in this afflictive hour. I feel it more and more, as I reflect upon it day by day."

"Aug. 15th. Mrs. R. F. very kindly came in and assisted me this morning. Friends are kind in this my time of special need. This afternoon brother Buchanan and I attempted a ride to Unionville. When about three quarters of a mile from home, the horse took fright, and upset the carriage, and threw us out. The forward wheels separated from the others, and thus extricated the horse, who stopped at once. Brother B. crawled out some way, I know not how, and I, after rolling over and over, found myself getting out of the back of the carriage. We fortunately escaped with but little injury. The carriage was considerably broken. My left arm, shoulder, and side were lamed somewhat. But we have great cause for grat-

itude to our heavenly Father, for mercifully protecting us and prererving us. The Lord is on our right hand and our left. Had the horse run, we must inevitable have been killed; but our escape was providential.

Dr. Jewett, Agent of the Mass. Temperance Society, arrived here this afternoon, at half past six o'clock. He lectured this evening in the vestry, which was filled to overflowing, and was very acceptable.

Friday, 28th. C. and I took G. to Upton to take the stage, and then went to Worcester. We dined in Grafton with Rev. Mr. B., and took tea in Worcester with Rev. Mr. S. Called on Dr. Abby, the distinguished physician for spinal diseases, for medical advice. He prescribed for me, and thinks I may be cured. He examined my back; says it is diseased; but told me of other difficulties of which I was ignorant, and for which he prescribed."

At Providence.—Sept. 9th.

"I went in the evening and heard a fine sermon—the *annual sermon* before the A. B. C. F. M., by Rev. Dr. Beman, of Troy. The evening meeting was held at Dr. Tucker's church, and the house was crowded to overflowing. Text in Psalms lxxii, 17.

Our horse took fright this afternoon, and ran away. He was attached to the carriage, and carrying that with him, he ran half a mile at full speed, upset the carriage, and broke it badly, though without any injury to himself or any *individual*. Thanks to the Lord, that by an overruling providence, no lives were jeopardized. I was about to ride, and was preparing to go, when the horse started from the door, and thus subjected us to the expense of getting the carriage mended; but had I got into it, and the horse then run, I might have broken my *neck*, or dislocated

some other bones,—so that I see the hand of the Lord, even in what appears to us a bad affair."

"Saturday, 12th. At half past ten my husband and I took leave of our dear friends, and turned our faces homewards,—having been two weeks absent from Hopkinton. The parting from friends to-day was peculiarly painful. I have never, except the day after my marriage when I left home, felt so tried in parting with them. I felt impressed that I should not see *all* the family again; that before our next meeting another breach will be made in our circle, as there has been since our last,—and I could not refrain from weeping. The Lord knows *who*, if either, is to be called. May we all be prepared.

26th. I met the Children's Mite Society this afternoon; forty-three present. I have not been able to meet them before for a year. We were mutually glad to meet. Being disappointed in our proposed plan of educating a heathen child, by paying $12 a year, and wishing to appropriate our funds, I presented to the children the case of the 'Amistad captives,' which deeply interested them, and they decided at once to give their offering to them. The contribution of this afternoon was ninety-four cents; added to that collected last year, it is $9,14; and I hope some more may be handed in. It is a worthy object, and is now called for.

Sabbath, Sept. 27th. My husband has preached two very solemn sermons to-day, from the words of our Saviour, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment.' They affected me deeply. The doctrine of the '*eternal* punishment of the finally impenitent,' is very revolting to my feelings, but I nevertheless *fully believe* it a doctrine substantiated by the word of God. I must believe it. The

congregation were very solemn. I think the sermon was not without its effect. I pray God he will bless his own truth.

Thursday, Oct. 8th. Two ladies came into the prayer-meeting this afternoon. Can it be that there are no more of our sisters who wish to pray for Zion's increase?

C. returned this evening at nine in safety and in health. Left all our friends well. While he was in P., he and my parents made arrangements to have me go to Philadelphia, to consult the celebrated Dr. Dewees. By leave of Providence, we shall leave home next Monday for P. We shall meet my mother in New York on Tuesday, and she will accompany us there."

"*Oct. 9th.*

VERY DEAR PARENTS,—I have but a moment to write this morning, just to say, Providence permitting, I will meet you in New York on Tuesday morning, via Norwich. I cannot find words to express my gratitude to you for your *unbounded* kindness. I *feel it;* I appreciate it, and can only say, the Lord reward you and bless you a thousand fold."

"Tuesday, 13th. At nine found ourselves safely landed in New York, and an hour after was made very happy in seeing my dear parents who came from Providence, leaving all the family in usual health.

At nine we left New York for Philadelphia, in the cars, and arrived there at four o'clock, having travelled three hundred miles since we left home. We took tea and spent a few hours at the 'United States Hotel,' while C. went in search of a convenient place at a private boarding-house, during our stay in the city. Rev. Mrs. T. T. Waterman very kindly assisted C. in finding comfortable quarters."

Extract from a letter of her mother, dated Philadelphia, Oct. 20th.

"I was in hopes we should not be detained here longer than Mrs. B. was; but Dr. Meigs says this is a very different case from any he has ever had; it will take time to examine it; had it been what he thought it was, we should probably have been on our way home now. He thinks she can be cured, at least he hopes so, and of course she will have to remain."

To her parents.—Oct. 26th.

"I cannot feel easy to be here so long, on account of the expense, both in board and the doctor's bill, which I fear will be very large. It causes me a great deal of trouble, and I wish I could be able to leave here tomorrow morning; but I know you wish Dr. M. to do all in his power, and then if he cannot restore me, the case must be given up as incurable, and we will be resigned to our Father's will. Some days I am entirely *discouraged*, and then I get a gleam of light and hope. I have severe pain now while I write.

Mrs. P. is very kind and obliging. She said to me, at the dinner table, 'I thank thee to give my kind regards to thy mother; I want to see her very much.'

Earthly physicians can do nothing without the blessing of the *Heavenly*. Let me have the prayers of all of you who bow before the throne, that the means used may prove efficacious in the recovery of my health."

"Tuesday, 27th. I have ridden eight miles to-day; had a fine ride, in company with Mrs. and Miss P., Mrs.

L., and my husband. We visited the Girard Colleges, which are built of white marble, three stories high. There are to be five buildings, two of which only are completed. They are perfectly neat—about 125 feet long. The centre building is very large, surrounded by upwards of thirty columns. It is a beautiful building. There is to be no wood about the building, excepting the doors. The floors, steps, roofs, chimneys, etc., are all of marble. We ascended to the top of the building, which is about 150 steps from the ground, and from which the view of Philadelphia is delightful. On one side we could see the Schuylkill, and on the other the Delaware rivers. This was a great undertaking for an invalid, but the eye was so gratified that I forgot the fatigue of the body.

We also visited the 'Laurel Hill Cemetery,' which is four miles from the city. The locality is admirable—very romantic, a hill on the border of the Schuylkill. Much taste is displayed in the arrangement of the lots and in the variety of trees and shrubbery. It is comparatively new, and one of the most beautiful spots I ever visited. In the Cemetery there is a fine large chapel, for burial services to be held. In the chapel there is a very large window, containing all colors of painted glass set in diamonds. There is every color of the rainbow, and through it the scenery outside was grand.

From the Cemetery we went to the State 'Lunatic Hospital,' which is a beautiful building, not quite completed."

"*Oct. 30th.*

MY DEAR SISTER,—I regret your anxiety for me has deprived you of rest and sleep. Always think of me as *happy* and *comfortable*. I trust you have heard from me to-day by my letter to father and mother, which gave quite

a flattering account of my health. But before I proceed to give farther particulars, I must express my gratitude to you, dear sister, for your kind offer to come to Philadelphia, to be with me while I am here. I feel greatly obliged to you for your readiness and willingness to make such a sacrifice, as you would be obliged to do were you to come, for my sake; but I am most happy to say that I shall not be obliged to put you to any inconvenience, as I have this afternoon gained the doctor's free permission to return home on Monday next.

I am glad to hear you are engaged in doing good for the heathen. I hope you will be able to accomplish much and get the hearts of the children enlisted in the good work. I must close, with particulars when I see you.

Ever your affectionate sister, REBECCA."

"Sabbath, Nov. 1st. Beautiful day.

'Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.'

Attended the 1st Presbyterian Church this morning, to hear Rev. Albert Barnes, but was disappointed in hearing him. Rev. Eli Smith, missionary to Syria, preached an interesting missionary sermon.

This afternoon attended the 5th Presbyterian Church. Mr. Waterman did not preach, but received five members to the church, and administered the sacrament to about four hundred persons. Solemn and interesting occasion.

Nov. 2. After spending three weeks in the city, I am happy at the prospect of returning to my friends. We left Philadelphia at seven, A. M.; arrived at Providence at five o'clock, and went directly to my father's. Found all well.

"Well for a minister to leave his people awhile."

This afternoon C. and I called to see my old friend, Mrs. W. J. Had a very pleasant call, and Mrs. J. very politely gave me a copy of 'Gurney's Letters on the West Indies.'

Sabbath, 8th. Visited Sabbath-school at High-street Church. Met many of my old fellow-teachers, and some of my scholars. Heard Rev. Mr. Parker, the pastor elect of High-street Church."

"*Providence, Nov.* 7, 1840.
Saturday, A. M.

MY DEAREST HUSBAND,—How perfectly natural it seems to write you from Providence. How many happy hours I have enjoyed *here* in writing to *you*. I am very happy to hear you are *well*, and that you get along comfortably. I know, however, you must be lonely, *very lonely*, and I comfort myself with the hope that you take this time to visit our good friends in H., who I am sure will welcome you. It is a great satisfaction to me to hear that no one was disposed to blame you for your long absence. I was apprehensive some might. That all would be glad to see you at home again I had not a doubt, and I sometimes think it is well for a minister to leave his people awhile, that they may love him better when he gets home. I thought much of you on Monday,—regretted it rained. I am surprised you had so many votes for the 'Liberty Ticket;' I did not think there would be but *one*. I laughed heartily at the idea of your being nominated as a representative to the State Legislature. It is droll enough I think. I should think the people were a little beside themselves. The duties of a pastor and a Representative seem so incongruous that I am quite surprised at the nomination. I am relieved much by hearing that the pulpit has

been regularly supplied and to the acceptance of the people.

I fancy I hear you saying, why does not Rebecca tell me how her own health is, and not keep me in suspense? I *had* almost forgotten myself, but I will tell you. I am pretty well. I think this long easterly storm has affected me somewhat. It predisposes to *neuralgia*. I attribute all trouble to the weather and not to *imprudence*. I am very sorry to hear our house is injured by the rain in our absence. I did not even think of it. I am surprised to hear our well is dry. I had no doubt it would be supplied ere this. Will it have to be dug deeper? If so, do have it done immediately, before the ground gets frozen.

I have been thinking you would have a fine time for study while I am here, and father often says, 'What a good time Mr. W. will have to study, while he has not you to trouble him by running into the study.' But from your letter I perceive that my absence has a contrary effect. If you cannot *study* so well now, you can make visits as well, and I am glad to find you are engaged in doing so. I am grateful to our kind friends in H. for their interest in me and my health, and I am sure I shall be glad to see them again. I hope with Mrs. D. most sincerely that 'I shall not *lose all this* winter,' and I *fondly* hope I shall not."

Nov. 20.—*At Hopkinton.*

"Six weeks have passed away since I left home. This is the longest time I have ever been absent since I came to H. to live. I did not expect to be so long away when I left, but I could not well return earlier. The physician whom I consulted in Philadelphia, detained me there three

weeks, and then my friends in Providence felt they had claim for a few weeks, and as I do not expect to go from home this winter, I thought I would stay with them a little while. I have been greatly benefitted by my journey. God has graciously used Dr. M. as an agent to restore me to comfortable health. I feel that I am really essentially better. My general health is vastly better, and my old complaints are greatly relieved. Dr. M. found mine a very singular case, the like of which he has never had come under his observation. He found it intricate, and of so long standing, that it was difficult to be cured. He feels confident that his treatment of the case will very much improve my health, and I thought he was quite sanguine in his hope that I shall yet be well. He thinks I cannot be a stranger to suffering, and if I had *known* my complaints, and received proper treatment, I might years ago have been restored; whereas, by the delay of proper attention, I have been growing worse, until I was in a state which led me to fear I should not long survive. But my prospects brighten; my hopes are strengthened; and I trust I shall again be permitted to say I am *well*. Dr. M. was very attentive and kind. I found myself quite attached to him. He is very gentlemanly and affable. When my husband asked for his bill, he declined presenting any, by saying, 'My dear sir, are you not a clergyman?' 'Yes sir.' 'Well, do you *think* I would charge you any thing for my services? Why I never charged a clergyman a cent in my life for my services that I *know of*, and if I had ever found I had *done* so, why I would have called him back and refunded the money. All the compensation I wish, sir, is that your wife may be cured, and that you will give me your good prayers.'

This was truly a very unexpected favor. It surprised me very much, and I know not how to express my gratitude to him, or to our Father in heaven, who prompted him to do the kindness. I presume his bill would have been at least fifty dollars, had he charged any thing. 'Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.'"

To her parents.—Dec. 4th.

"On Dec. 1st, Tuesday, Calvin and I went to Holliston, to attend a meeting of ministers and their wives, which was very pleasant. There is an association of this kind, composed of several neighboring clergymen, who meet quarterly; and their wives hold a meeting at the same time and place. There were seven ministers and their wives present on Tuesday. The former met in Rev. Mr. Storrs' study, and the latter in the parlor. Rev. Dr. Ide, of Medway, is one of the number. I was very glad I went. I think they must be profitable meetings."

Her journal of Dec. 1st, adds:—

"Several subjects were introduced for discussion,—such as the ladies' prayer-meetings, maternal meetings, objects of benevolence, etc. etc. I was interested and profited by the exercises, and felt that I was less than the least. I came home determined to do more in my Master's cause than I have hitherto done."

"Wednesday, Dec. 2d. By the return of the 2d of Dec., I am forcibly reminded of my dear brother William, who would have numbered thirty-one years had he lived to see this day; but his birth-days are ended; he is gone, and we can only say, 'He is not, for God has taken him.'

Ladies' Miss. Society.—Reads Blunt's History of Christ.—Distrusts her motives.

Thursday, 3d. The Missionary Society met here this afternoon; twenty-seven present; pleasant meeting. At the close of the meeting, the annual meeting of the Ladies' Moral Reform Society was held.

Sabbath, Dec. 6th. I did not think it prudent to go out to church to-day, and it is fortunate I did not, for the storm has increased, and it would have been hazardous to my health to have gone out. I regretted it very much, as it was our communion season, and two sisters were to be added to our church. But it is all right. He who doeth all things well, has ordered it as it is, and why should I complain? I will not; I do not. I have endeavored to improve the Sabbath at home, in reading, meditation, and prayer. Have been much interested in reading 'Blunt's History of Christ,' and have felt something of a spirit of prayer for our dear church; for my dear husband, that his labors to-day might be attended with a blessing; and for myself, that I might be quickened and revived in the duties of religion. I have asked myself why I was anxious to go to the house of God to-day; why wish to commemorate the Savior's dying love? Why welcome to the Lord's table two that have been brought into the fold of Christ? What motive has actuated me? I am not satisfied that my motives were proper, and perhaps for that very reason the privileges of the Lord's house have been denied me.

Thursday, 10th. Ladies' prayer-meeting here this afternoon; ten present; and the interview was very pleasant, and I think profitable. There was a spirit of prayer among us. We felt that God was here. The prayers were short and pointed. The first prayer was for the *church*,—for its aged and infirm members, and for the sick and afflicted. The second for the *church*,—for the luke-

warm professors, and for the hypocrites in Zion. The third for the *church*,—for the middle aged and the young members, and for the pastor. The fourth for the schools in our own town, and those engaged in instruction. The fifth for the Sabbath-school, and the teachers. And the sixth for the impenitent,—the children of the church who are impenitent particularly. Some profitable conversation engrossed the time intervening between the prayers. And the question came up, whether we should select some individual as a subject for special prayer, and Mrs. —— requested us to make her son —— the subject. Mrs. —— then requested that her husband might also be remembered. I hope we shall have a spirit of prayer during this week. I think we have spent the time quite profitably. We have unbosomed our religious feelings, and I trust we shall all be benefited by the interview. Two almost dead coals, by being put together, may kindle again and get bright. So may it be with us, for we were *almost dead—spiritually*."

To her parents.—Dec. 12*th.*

"I am much encouraged. I improve as rapidly as I can expect. I find fatigue produces immediate pain, so that I am very careful. I feel that I have great reason for gratitude to our Heavenly Father, for giving me so much health this winter. What a contrast between *this* and *last winter*. I hope I shall feel disposed to consecrate anew my renewed strength to our Heavenly Father, who has so far restored me. He has not probably raised me up simply that I may enjoy life better and be happier, but for the honor of his name and his own glory. I desire thus to understand it, and improve the mercy."

Notes of sermons.—Knows something of a pastor's trials.

"Sabbath, 20th. C. is at Unionville to-day, on an exchange with Rev. Mr. Haven, who has favored us with two excellent discourses. This morning it was a doctrinal sermon, from Matt. xvi, 13–15. 'Who do men say that I the Son of man am? But who say ye that I am?'"

Here follows a full, minute abstract of the sermon, containing in many instances the very words employed, and the Scripture references, closing with:—

"I was very much pleased with the sermon. The style and language were rich and full of meaning. It made a deep impression on my mind."

It is proper to state here, that it was always her constant custom to take full notes of all such sermons as peculiarly interested her.

To her siser E.—Dec. 21st.

* * * "I wish I had brought some of your work home, which I should have been glad to do for you; and now, if you will put up something, and send by Mr. Walker, I will do it gladly for you, and return it the earliest opportunity; any kind of work you can spare best.

I am glad to learn, by your letter, that you have some accessions to your church; I hope you may have them very often. I am glad your pastor 'grows in the favor and estimation of the people,' and hope you will all sustain him by your coöperation and prayers. His labors are arduous; his duties responsible. I think I have learned *something* of a pastor's perplexities, and joys,—his trials, and his happiness,—and I am more and more convinced that he has a great work to do, and that he needs much

assistance from his flock. We have nothing of special interest in our church.

I am glad to hear of ——, that she had a *temperance* wedding."

To her parents.—Dec. 22d.

"It is hardly sunrise yet, and I am seated at my desk to write you. We have breakfasted, attended family worship, and I have done up my morning work."

"*Dec. 24th.*

I am much obliged to you for the offer of Dr. Emmons' Funeral Sermon. We have not received it, and will be much obliged to you if you will lend it to us. I want very much to read it.

You may be interested to know something of the amount of presents we have received since we kept house,—sixteen months. I will give you a few items. * * * Don't you think our friends are very kind? I did not think they would amount to so much till they were added up. *These* are as valuable to us as $—— in money would be, *besides* other articles,—and C. has had hay and oats enough for his horse to keep him well for six months. I mention these things because I suppose you are interested in whatever interests or concerns me.

I shall think of you all on Friday, and I doubt not I shall be remembered by you. It seems hardly possible that two years are passed since I was married and left the home of my childhood and youth. But it is even so.

I should be very happy to go with Calvin to Providence next week, but I feel that it would be hazardous just now to go, as I am just getting better; I feel tolerably well, except my return of neuralgia, which I hope is only a temporary difficulty."

Thoughts on the removal of her brother's remains from St. Joseph's.

To her sister E.—Dec. 25th.

"I congratulate you, in the prospect of being again supplied with a shepherd. May he lead you into 'green pastures and beside the still waters.' I hope he will prove a faithful and devoted pastor. I should be gratified to attend his installation. That church will ever be dear to me, and I am interested in whatever relates to its prosperity. I am glad to hear Capt. Rogers has visited Providence. His visit must have caused all your hearts to bleed afresh, for it would naturally bring forcibly to your minds the circumstances attending his last visit. I feel very glad father has made arrangements to have the remains of our dear departed brother brought to Providence. I fear, dear Elizabeth, I have not been able to profit aright by that deep and bitter affliction. I desired and prayed that I might; but I am very fearful that it has not been sanctified to my soul. How is it with you? Has it led you nearer to God? Hus it weaned your affections from this world? Are you a better Christian? May we both experience the benefit of being chastened. How much I have had to wean me from this world, and yet with how firm a grasp I hold it.

I wrote you recently that I was entirely free from neuralgia; and being so well, I was induced last Wednesday, to avail myself of the privilege of attending one of our church meetings,—which I had not done for a long time. It was the first meeting I had been able to attend in the vestry for more than a year, and it was a pleasant, comfortable afternoon, and I ventured to go. I was well wrapped up, and felt warm enough in meeting, but I took cold, and began immediately to have a return of pain, which has followed me closely ever since, and some of the

"Depressed in spirits."—Year passed happily.—Letter-book.

time I have suffered much. It is rather discouraging, and has depressed my spirits more than they have been for a long time; but I hope to feel better in a day or two. I hope you will not think me imprudent in going. The vestry is very damp in *summer*, but when there is a good fire in it in *winter*, it is not thought to be damp, and I did not think it was running a risk. I shall not try it again however.

I am glad Wm. continues his patchwork. Tell him if he lives to be old, he will love to think he made a bedquilt for the heathen."

"Tuesday, 29th. Have written several letters to-day; one to Mrs. D. at Cape Vincent; and have also written to my parents, sister E., and her husband. Have been depressed in spirits very much to-day on account of my present indisposition, and a recurrence to the death of my dear brother, which always affects me.

Wednesday, 30th. C. left home at half past seven this morning for Providence, to attend the installation of Rev. Mr. Parker at High-street Church.

Dec. 31st. In the providence of God, I am brought to the close of this year. One year to-night I felt that I had been as the 'barren fig-tree,'—had borne no fruit to the glory of God. Then I prayed, 'Spare me yet another year, oh Lord, and try me.' The Lord has answered that prayer; he has spared me. Have I borne fruit this year? I fear I have been as worthless this year as I was the last. I have been looking over the year which is past, and recounting God's mercies, to-day. I have passed the year happily, and only regret I have done so little for my Master. I have been looking over my *letter-book*, to see the number of letters I have written and received this year.

Intends to write a new-year's letter every year.

I find it as follows—viz: I have written 121, and received 123. My desire is that all these letters may not have been in vain.

I am naturally carried back in my imagination *two years*. I think with interest of the 1st of Jan. 1839, when I was married. I trust I shall never recur to that day with any feelings of regret. The years have rapidly passed away. Two years are gone since I left the home of my childhood and youth,—since I bade farewell to the paternal roof, where I had spent twenty-four 'happy new-year's' days, and came here to take up my abode. How various are the scenes, *joyous* and *grievous*, through which I have passed during this short interval of time.

I wrote and forwarded a new-year's letter to-day to my parents, brothers, and sisters, in Providence, which practice I intend to pursue, Providence permitting, every year. I began it last year."

To her parents.

"But we are pained, in looking back, when we think that during the last year, one of our dear family, of our own happy number, has left us. He is gone; we shall see his face no more. How painful, how sad. The Lord have compassion on those of us who survive, and may we so live that it may not be necessary for him, in justice to his own glory, to cut any of us down the next year, for a misimprovement of the chastisement of the past year."

Visit at Unionville.—"Large correspondence."

CHAPTER XVI.

SUFFERINGS AND PATIENCE SEEN IN LETTERS AND JOURNAL OF 1841.

"Jan. 1, 1841. Another year has opened upon us. The morning was delightful, but this afternoon and evening has been very stormy. A heavy fall of snow this afternoon and evening. Deacon and Mrs. S., of Unionville, very politely invited us to dine with them, in company with Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Haven, *senior* and *junior*. We had a pleasant visit, and returned in the midst of a hard snow-storm.

Jan. 2d. It is a find day after the storm of yesterday. I have been busily occupied all day in filing up letters,—which I find to be quite an undertaking, as I have so large a correspondence.

Sabbath, 3d. A delightful day—more pleasant than it has been for a number of Sabbaths. My dear husband has preached two solemn and faithful sermons, which I trust will do good. This morning from 'Train up a child in the way he should go,' etc. This afternoon from 'Lord, who has believed our report?' I enjoyed the sermons myself, and think they were adapted to the opening year.

Our Sabbath-school was re-organized to-day, and I was appointed, among others, as a teacher. I longed to tell our superintendent, I would accept the appointment cheerfully, but I dared not do it. I do not think my health is yet adequate to the task,—I wish it were, I would not then remain out of the school a week; no, I love the Sab-

Glad the family can rest side by side in the grave.

bath-school; I feel at home in it, and hope when spring opens, to be able to engage in teaching again.

Monday, 4th. Our church have observed this day, in concert with thousands in this and other lands, as a day of prayer for the conversion of the *world*. I was unable, on account of my health, to go out. I regretted it exceedingly; I had anticipated it with much interest, and was so disappointed that I found it impossible to enjoy the time alone at home as I wished to.

11th. We have been reading aloud—C. and I—the 'Life and Times of Martin Luther,' and have closed it this evening. It is deeply interesting."

To her parents.—Jan. 11*th.*

"I am very glad to learn you have made arrangements to have the remains of our dear William conveyed from St. Joseph's to Providence. Although it matters little where our bodies lie when we are gone, there is a consolation in having a family placed side by side, that we may visit their graves, and drop the tear of affection over their remains. Just half of your children are gone; how long the remaining five will tabernacle in the flesh, *God only knows.*

Fast day must have been very interesting. I doubt not the effect produced by having a *union meeting* was good, and I hope good results will follow. We observed the day here, and the occasion was a very interesting one; but I was unable to go. The meeting was in the vestry, and I dared not risk my health to go into it. I was sadly disappointed. The day was severely cold,—one of the coldest we have had this season; otherwise the meeting would have been in the church,—then I could have gone."

Contrasts herself with Mrs. S. L. Smith.

"Sabbath, 17th. A driving south-west storm to-day has kept me from the sanctuary of God; but I trust the day has not been *lost*. I have had some serious reflections respecting my own spiritual state, produced by reading the excellent Memoir of Mrs. Sarah L. Smith, late missionary to Syria. The *contrast* between her Christian character and my own makes me ashamed of myself, and I can only weep in view of the contrast. I am led very seriously to doubt my acceptance of God, and fear I have been nearly twelve years deceiving myself and others. I am not satisfied with my evidence of being a Christian. I find my heart filled with sinfulness; my thoughts, my affections, my feelings are all sinful. Search me, oh Lord, and try me, and purify me of all evil, and make me a true and faithful servant of my Lord and Master. 'Keep me as in the hollow of thy hand.' 'Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.'

"*Jan.* 21*st*.

And so you, brother C., have been elected Clerk of the church! Well, do your duty; keep the records fair and neat; and don't oblige the church to 'turn you out of office next year.'

I was amused to hear Mr. W. had given you a sermon on 'perfection.' But he is a queer man, and you never know how to take him. I laughed heartily when Calvin told me the stand he took during the examination of Mr. Parker. I thought when I heard he was on the council, he would make trouble about Mr. P.'s perfectionism; but C. says Mr. W. observed that 'it was what *he* had preached this forty years.' I should like to have been present very much; but I thought it injudicious to venture.

I rejoice to hear there are any indications of good among

you, and hope they will not prove like the 'morning cloud and early dew.' It must be pleasant for you to have your pastor take an interest in your prayer-meetings and encourage you. I was pleased with the suggestion in your letter, of having questions or subjects discussed in your prayer-meetings, and with the *subjects* which you mentioned. I shall propose it to our ladies at our next prayer-meeting.

C. preached on profanity Sabbath before last, and early in the week, he received a handsome present from a gentleman, who remarked as he gave it to him, 'This is for preaching *to me* last Sabbath. I felt as if the whole sermon was to me, and felt reproved. I am in the habit of swearing, but I suppose it *is* a *habit*, and I mean to try to break it off. My children hear me swear, and I whip them for swearing; but I will try to break off the habit myself, and then I can consistently whip them if I hear them swear.' How much better is that than going off and finding fault because a minister is pointed in his preaching. I was much pleased with his honesty.

Tuesday evening I attended a very interesting neighborhood meeting, three miles from here. It was lively and spirited and solemn. A young lady came and took my hand after meeting, and requested me to remember her in prayer, saying, 'You don't know how much I feel the need of it.' I hope we may soon see many inquiring what they must do to be saved. I long to see the day. But this is a *peculiar field*, and the church has much to contend with. The men of the world are bent on making it appear, that there should be no distinction between the church and the world, and many church-members are standing in fear of these men, and dare not come out and act decidedly. This is a trial which some of our most

devoted lament deeply. I feel as if they ought to take a more decided stand, and C. has labored greatly to secure this end."

"Sabbath, 24th. Calvin is relieved very much from the difficulty across the lungs and chest, by an application of a mustard plaster. He *appears* much better, so that he has preached two sermons to-day. This morning on the fourth commandment, and this afternoon on 'American slavery.' I liked the candid and unimpassioned manner in which he presented the claims of the degraded slaves, three millions of whom are in our own happy,—but improperly styled,—*free* country. May the presentation of the subject be attended with the Divine blessing, and may many be convinced of the evil of slavery, and be willing to exert themselves for its entire and immediate emancipation.

Saturday, 30th. Mrs. —— spent an hour and a half with me this afternoon. She came to see me in reference to certain reports, now in circulation, injurious to her. * * She appeared well, refuted the charges alleged against her, and though she acknowledged she had been imprudent in conversation, assured me she had had no evil motive, and had a conscience void of offence. I endeavored to be faithful to her, and hope my conversation will do her good.

31st. A poor miserable man, who has not been to church here since we lived in H., has been out all day, and after meeting this afternoon called here to express his great satisfaction in having been to church; said he 'liked the morning discourse very well, and the afternoon discourse *extraordinary well*.' He 'liked all' C.'s *talk* very well indeed, and meant to go again, though he 'had not cloth-

Mr. Kirk's sermons read in the family.—Likes the practice.

ing which was suitable to go to meeting.' He went to the monthly concert this evening also, and I hope he will continue to go to meeting, and also become a follower of Jesus, who is able to pluck him as a brand out of the burning, and thus magnify his grace."

To her mother.—Feb. 2d.

"Tell A. I think she will be much interested in reading the 'Life and Times of Luther.' It is written by Miss Sedgwick, in a very captivating style, and I was deeply interested in it, and think you would be paid for reading it yourself.

I admire Mr. Kirk's sermons. I read them aloud, so that we may all be benefited, and only take the time of one; and then I want to be in the habit of reading aloud at home. I like the practice. I think if *father* would read 'Two Years before the Mast' aloud, and explain the sailor phrases, you would all feel interested very much.

I am glad the girls have interested themselves so much in that destitute family in your neighborhood, or I would rather say the two families, who have been in a suffering condition. It will doubtless be a source of pleasure to the girls, and cause tears of gratitude to flow from those whom they relieve. 'Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, ye did it unto me,' are the words of our blessed Saviour.

When in Philadelphia I promised Mrs. Waterman I would write her soon after I returned to Hopkinton, and tell her particularly about my health, and she was to give Dr. Meigs information, but I have not done it yet, and have neglected it so long, it seems like a mountain, and I don't know when I shall fulfil my engagement. I think I

gain very slowly. I perceive a change during a *month*, but *scarcely* in a *week*. The doctor told me I should be long in *getting well*, and so I do not get discouraged.

We have nothing new here, except there is a project on foot to purchase our coffee-house, or hotel, for a high school. There was a meeting held last evening for the purpose."

To her father.—Feb. 3d.

"I have always regretted I could not have more of the society of my dear friends at my own house than I have ever yet done. Hopkinton seems so near to Providence, compared with Russia, that I gladly hoped I should see much of you all here.

I have been out all the afternoon making calls. Visited nine families. Found some rejoicing in Christ; some interested about their salvation; some thoughtless and hardened. Distributed appropriate tracts, and tried to do them good. But oh, what feeble instrumentality. Hope my dear parents are living near to God, and shewing to the world that they love the Saviour. There is nothing else worth living for; and why should we not honor and glorify our Lord Jesus.

Mr. W. is gone to attend a neighborhood prayer-meeting this evening at the house of a sick lady, who cannot get out to attend meeting."

To her sister.—Feb. 15th.

"I have been rather feverish, and had considerable pain, but feel to-day as if I should soon be well again. I was rejoiced to see father, though I regretted he could not stay longer, and that he found me in bed. He always finds me sick when he comes." * * *

Affected to tears in reading Mrs. Smith's Memoir.

"Tuesday, 16th. I sat up two hours this morning, and one hour and a half this evening. Am now gaining very well. I have been deeply interested the last week in reading the 'Memoir of the wife of Rev. Eli Smith,' missionary to Syria, which was presented me by my husband on new-year's day. I value it very highly. From the beginning to the close it is full of interest. She labored for Christ—for a world lying in sin. When I read the account of her death, I could not refrain from weeping, that she was thus early called from labors which so much engaged and interested her soul.

17th. Since my present indisposition commenced, I have been trying to devise some new projects of usefulness; when I get well, I hope I may be assisted by the Spirit of God in executing them. I feel as if I am a mere cipher in this world."

"*Thursday morning*, 18*th*.

You will be glad I am sure to hear that I am fast getting well again. I sat up nearly half the day yesterday, and shall try to sit still longer to-day. I have much for which I should be very grateful. I have had some view of my own heart of late. I have seen something of the depth of iniquity which reigns there. It seems to me as if the Holy Spirit could never dwell where sin so greatly abounds. I have been examining the foundation of my Christian hope. I trust I have evidence that it is based on the Rock of ages. I feel an assurance that I do love my Saviour, but I fear *very imperfectly*. Sometimes I have looked upon myself as a more than ordinary sufferer in this vale of tears. But I feel now, that my pains are and have been comparatively nothing, when I read of the sufferings of others, and especially of those of our dear

Sickness has "caused peevishness and childishness —Deep regret.

Redeemer. But I find, dear Elizabeth, I have been sick enough the last few years to affect *my mind* very sensibly. My nerves are unstrung, my mind weak and feeble—not far removed from a state of imbecility. It frequently appears to me as if I should never be as I was once, even—to say nothing of *improving* upon my former life. My memory is greatly impaired. Of my irritability, peevishness, and childishness, you and all our dear family must have been conscious. I have often wept over it. But until you and they have labored for years under a painful, wearing disease, which the best physicians pronounce the most calculated to affect the nerves and the spirits, none of you can fully appreciate my feelings. I have sometimes been sick of life, and feared I should never secure the favor of friends again. I have sometimes fancied my friends were all changed towards me; but *reflection* convinced me of my error. When last in Providence, —— said one day to me, 'It seems to me you are very much altered, you are nothing as you used to be.' Little did she think of the dagger she thrust into my bosom by that remark. I was painfully conscious that I was changed; but I felt that *disease* had made me so, and it was cutting to the heart to be reminded of it."

From Mr. Webster on the same day.

"My dear Parents,—Rebecca has had company all this afternoon, and I feared she would get exhausted, and so I have persuaded her to let me write for her. I think she is improving in her health now, and will soon, unless something more unfavorable occurs, be quite comfortable. She needs a *guardian very much indeed.* I hope you will not object to my being somewhat strict with her in this particular, of writing, till she is better. You *must* excuse her; she is *unable* to write much."

Thirty-six hours suffering.—Prays not for "less pain," but "more grace."

"Monday, 22d. The means resorted to yesterday have produced great relief. I had a *comfortless* night,—little rest and much pain; but after thirty-six hours suffering, I am relieved, and can now breathe and move with comparative ease. I feel grateful to God for appearing to my relief. I know and feel that I have no pains which I do not deserve, and I would not pray to have *them less;* but I would pray to have *more grace* to bear them. I feel I am impatient, and do not bear my trials with due submission to my Master's will.

Just four years to-day since I first saw and became acquainted with my husband. Since then God had graciously permitted us to find much happiness in the society of each other.

Tuesday, 23d. Mr. ——'s son left us this morning for his school at Leicester. He is a pleasant, amiable boy of sixteen. Has been a great sufferer from disease for a year and a half, and during the time gave his heart to God. I am pleased with his religious conversation. He looks forward to the ministry, if his health is adequate to its arduous duties.

March 2d. Town-meeting again to-day. Great excitement has prevailed. The question to-day is *rum* and *anti-rum*, and painful to say, the former party have carried the day, and secured the election of five selectmen who will not aid the temperance cause among us, and other officers of kindred spirits. But 'the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice.' He can cause 'the wrath of man to praise him,' and he can overrule all things for his own glory.

4th. To-day our new *President, General Wm. H. Harrison*, is to be inducted into office. Much parade will probably be made in various parts of our country, to celebrate this event, so gratifying to the 'whigs.' It is sug-

gested by some one, I don't remember whom, that 'Christians should observe the day in fasting and prayer for our rulers.' This appears to be a good suggestion.

Wrote to my dear mother to-day. I am blessed with the best of parents."

To her mother.

"This week we have been having a *protracted town* meeting. It commenced on Monday, and closed last evening. Great excitement prevailed, as is usual on such occasions; very full meetings, and both parties were zealous in getting out such as could not otherwise be there.

I feel grieved, dear mother, to hear how far astray from God and holy things —— has gone. It seems hardly possible that she can have 'forsaken her first,' her ardent 'love.' But we are all frail and erring mortals, and the restraining grace of God is all that keeps us probably from indulgence in equally aggravating sins. Let us not then think it is because we are any better than others, that we do not commit the same or greater sins,—but it is because God keeps us."

To her father.—March 10th.

"Mr. Stewart, the Irish temperance lecturer, of whom you have probable heard so much, is now with us. He came up from Unionville Sabbath morning, and lectured Sabbath evening, and Monday, and Tuesday evenings,—and this evening he is at a *Society temperance meeting.*

Our High School is prospering. They are incorporated this week, with power to hold $20,000. They have a committee appointed to secure a teacher, and hope is entertained that temperance, education and good morals will

Young Ladies' Temperance Society, of thirty-three members.

be promoted among us. I must now listen awhile to Mr. Stewart's conversation, and finish in the morning—so good night, good father."

She added in her journal on the same day:—

"The young ladies of our Sabbath-school have recently formed a Benevolent Society, to meet semi-monthly, and braid straw, and appropriate the avails of their work to getting clothing for destitute children, that they may attend the Sabbath-school. This is a very commendable object. They number more than thirty members. They met this afternoon. * * Thirty-five present. My husband took Mr. Stewart into the meeting, and both of them addressed the young ladies. A temperance pledge was drawn up on the spot, and thirty-three of the thirty-five signed it at once. It is a 'tee-total pledge,'—and it is certainly gratifying to see the young coming up to the mark. There has been a meeting held this evening in the vestry, to organize a Total Abstinence Society, which Mr. S. addressed. A large number joined it."

To her father.—March 20th.

"I perceive by yesterday's Recorder that the revival is still going on at Hartford, and among the laborers there perceive the name of your pastor. I hope he has or will return laden with the blessings of the gospel of peace. I hope he will bring home the influence of the revival, and that he will find his people ready to coöperate with him in efforts to bring sinners to Christ.

I received a cheering, excellent letter from A. G. yesterday. I was rejoiced to receive it, and to learn so particularly from High-street church. I rejoice that the Lord

is pouring out his Spirit so copiously, and that so many have been and are being brought into the fold of Christ. May the work go on till *multitudes* shall find Christ precious to their souls.

We have Rev. Mr. Hall, of New York, with us. He called yesterday, and C. has engaged him to pass the Sabbath with us, and preach for him. This will be a treat, for Calvin has never had a minister come to pass the Sabbath and relieve him of his labors but twice since he came here. All his relief is by exchanges, and he has not been out of town to exchange but once since we came from Philadelphia. I wish he had ministerial friends, who would occasionally pass a Sabbath with him."

To a friend at Providence.—March 25th.

"I said to myself last week, I wish A. would write me a good long letter, and give me particulars of the Lord's visit in Providence,—and I will, in my next letter to sister E., request her to favor me with a letter. The wish was soon gratified, for that very day's mail brought me the wished-for letter. Accept my thanks for your kind remembrance of me at this time, and rest assured you and the dear church will ever share my love and sympathy. I feel that this is truly a season of refreshing with you. Please congratulate our sisters, G., I., B., and L., for me, in the hopeful conversion of their bosom companions. May they now prove their *gratitude* to God, by living more to his honor and glory. Surely *they* have received *great blessings*. I hope they *realize* it. The prayer-meetings of which you speak, held by the wives and mothers of impenitent husbands and children, I think must be followed by the divine blessing. They must be meetings full of in-

Female prayer-meetings a thermometer of the piety of the church.

terest. May the Lord add his blessing to this effort put forth by the dear sisters. Your Thursday afternoon prayer-meetings I doubt not are profitable. I approve very much of the plan of having questions of a practical nature discussed. Am gratified to hear you have had so large an average attendance this winter. I think the female prayer-meeting is a very good thermometer, by which to try the atmosphere of the church. I have, since knowing of the interest in your midst, felt very solicitous to hear how the dear class of which we have both been teachers, are affected, and I assure you I am rejoiced that you were so particular in your account of them. I think it very evident H. is not *unaffected* by this revival. Were she, she would have been *indifferent*—now she manifests *opposition*, and this proves that she is *interested*. What a glorious thought this: 'The Lord reigneth.' He hath the hearts of all in his hands, and he *can turn* the hearts of any at his *will*. It is encouraging that three or four of the five who left the school have returned. I hope they have a faithful teacher, and that God will glorify his great name, in bringing them all to repentance. Can you conceive of any thing which would more rejoice your heart than to hear of the hopeful conversion to God of that dear class? I long for the happy day. Do be faithful to them, as you meet them. Could I see them, I would urge them to flee from the wrath to come, and embrace this favored opportunity to come to Christ. I rejoice with you, dear A., in the happy change effected by the Holy Spirit in your own heart within the last few months. In short, I am happy to learn *you are enjoying* this revival of religion. Labor with your might to bring sinners to Jesus now while he is with you. While the waters are troubled, aid all you can by putting them into the pool.

"Sin to be slain."—At Sabbath-school, the first time for a year and a half.

My family, which consists of four this winter, are all dispersed this evening,—and being alone, I thought I would write you a few lines. We had our ladies' prayer-meeting here this afternoon—nine present. We had a good season; it was solemn. Our meetings continue one hour and a quarter, and the time is chiefly occupied in prayer. I gave our sisters an account of your revival to-day, and solicited their prayers in your behalf. We were together at the same hour with yourselves. We engaged to-day to spend a season in prayer every morning at half past nine o'clock, in concert, for the outpouring of God's Spirit in our midst, and also for each sister to examine her own heart, and search out the *particular sins* which she felt separated her from God, and bring them and slay them before him."

"28th. I walked to and from meeting to-day, which I have not been able to do before in seven or eight weeks. Bore the walk very well. At noon I stopped at the Sabbath-school, the first time in a year and a half, and sat with the adult class of ladies, taught by Mrs. V. Mrs. V. and the class were very polite in asking *my opinion* of some parts of the lesson. The lesson was an important and solemn one,—'The Divinity of Christ.' I wonder any one should come to me for information. My knowledge of the Scriptures is very limited. I feel my ignorance, and lament it.

If Sabbath-school teachers knew what a privilege they enjoyed, in being permitted to teach, they would prize it more. I enjoyed being in the school to-day. I felt as if I had reached home from a long journey.

Monday, 29th. This has been a trying day to me, and to-night have a head-ache, eyes-ache, side-ache, etc. etc.

Aches soon to be left in the grave.—Averse to "*living* an invalid."

It is no new thing for me to have aches and pains. I shall by and by leave them all I trust in the grave, and be at *ease* with my Saviour. If I am prepared for the change which awaits me, why should I dread it, or wish it delayed. I sometimes wish I could either be restored to *health*, or else taken from this to another world. Somehow or other I have a peculiar aversion to living an invalid so long as to be burdensome to friends. I would rather die *lamented*, I confess, than live to be cumbersome to any one. This world possesses *few* attractions to me. I confess it would cost me a severe struggle to bid friends a final adieu, yet would I not feel to say, 'It is better to depart and be with Christ?' I am rather inclined to think I shall never be well, but that my complaints will eventually terminate in consumption. I have been led to this train of thought by the reception of a letter from an old friend. *God's will be done.*

April 1st. Very stormy morning, but it cleared off at noon, and we held our annual meeting of the Ladies' Missionary Society here. Twenty-three present. Our number is upwards of one hundred. The average attendance has been seventeen the past year. After an interesting discussion on the object to which our funds should be appropriated, and the *sum* desirable to raise, we voted unanimously to make an effort to raise $125, and to appropriate it to the American *Home* Missionary Society. Last year we voted to raise $100, and the Lord blessed us, and enabled us to raise even more than that—we raised $112,—$100 of which the ladies very generously contributed to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to constitute me a life member of that Board. May the Lord assist us this year in our effort to raise the proposed sum, and open the hearts of many to contribute to this object.

Meets a youth to whom former conversation was blessed.—Dr. Parker of China.

I feel fatigued this evening. I was quite excited this afternoon, as I found myself interested in the cause, and plead it before the ladies.

April 5th. Had some personal conversation with —— this afternoon. Was much gratified with the interview. She thinks she has given her heart to God. She told me that the first person who had manifested any special interest in the salvation of her soul, was myself, in 1839.

I feel grateful to God, if any feeble instrumentality of my own, has led a soul to the Saviour of sinners. 'Not unto me,' oh Lord, 'not unto me, but to thy name be all the glory.'

April 7th. This afternoon, Calvin and I have been to Framingham, to pass the afternoon at Rev. Mr. Brigham's, where we met Rev. Dr. Parker, of China, and his wife. They were married in Washington on the 29th of March. Dr. P. embarks for Liverpool on the 17th instant, in the steamer Acadia, to be absent about four months. He will leave his wife behind. He has married cousin Harriet Webster. I shall be proud to own him as a *cousin*. I was exceedingly pleased with him. He has a Chinese to accompany him wherever he goes. He is teaching him the language of China, or rather is with him to converse with him in Chinese, so that he may retain his knowledge of it. He fears he might lose what he has been so long in acquiring, if he should not converse with some one regularly, as he is to be yet a year in this country. The Chinese name is *Chin Sung*. The former is his given name. He is often called *Ar Sung*—Ar means Mr."

To her mother—April 8th.

"Tuesday evening Calvin and I went to Unionville, to hear Rev. Mr. Pierpont lecture on temperance. He could only give one lecture now, and the people of Unionville had a prior claim. He purposes to visit us very soon. He thought he might come next week; he will let us hear from him on Saturday, stating the time he will come. He gave an admirable lecture Tuesday evening. He was one hundred minutes lecturing, but no persons appeared to be weary."

To her father.—April 14th.

"Calvin received a letter from Rev. Mr. Pierpont, of Boston, to-day. He is to lecture here next Monday evening, 26th instant. I wish you could hear him. I know you would be interested. Temperance is certainly gaining ground in our town, and I wish I could tell you religion was too. But alas! 'This people's hearts have waxed gross, their ears are dull of hearing, their eyes have they closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and be converted.' Zion mourns! Her ways are desolate! How is religion thriving in the Beneficent Church? Has your pastor brought home from Hartford the spirit of the revival.

Rev. Dr. Parker sails on Saturday for Liverpool. I gave him a letter of introduction to uncle Gair, and hope they will become acquainted.

Tuesday must have been a gloomy day indeed to you, especially as so trying a duty devolved on you,—to have the remains of him who was dear to us all deposited in the

"William's death" fresh in memory.—Pierpont's lecture at Hopkinton.

silent grave. How often has been opened afresh the painful wound we experienced in hearing of our dear William's death; so that the event is kept fresh in our memories. First we heard that he slept in death. A little time after this wound was made, his clothing, etc., were sent home; then his lifeless remains; and now the burial of the remains. May we improve these repeated sad events, so as to promote God's glory and our own spiritual improvement and sanctification. The Lord orders all things. He will never afflict us without enabling us to sustain our afflictions."

"April 16th. This afternoon had some conversation with a pedlar, on temperance, of whom I declined making a purchase because he was not a temperance man. Hope he will remember the *talk*.

26th. Rev. Mr. Pierpont, of Boston, gave us an excellent temperance lecture this evening. The house was well filled, and the audience very attentive. Had the evening been pleasant, many more would probably have been out. I think the lecture will do good.

Tuesday, 27th. Rev. Mr. P. passed the night with us, and left us this morning about six for Boston. He is a very agreeable, gentlemanly man. He gave me a piece of his temperance poetry in my Album, which he had never before written in ink. I shall value it highly."

The album here referred to was filled with *choice* contributions of a *few* of her visitors and friends. She took "great pleasure in its perusal, and in its suggestions of past scenes." Her interest in temperance gave peculiar value, in her view, to these lines of Mr. P.

The poetry referred to is transferred to this page :—

THE WELL.

"Round the wine-cup and the bowl,
Wit may come with song and laughter ;—
But there come forever after
Pains that pierce and rack the soul :
These twain
Sin and pain
Have, for aye, one chain around them,
For together God hath bound them.
While these friends of age and youth,
Health and cheerfulness and truth,
Still dwell
In the Well,
Where the ancient sages found them.

JOHN PIERPONT.

HOPKINTON, April 26, 1841."

"May 2d. This is quite an eventful day. It is the twelfth anniversary of my covenant engagements to be forever the Lord's. It seems impossible that twelve years have passed away, but it is even so,—and I have occasion to deplore my unfaithfulness and want of love to the dear Saviour. How little progress, if *any*, have I made in holiness. How little grown in grace. Alas! I am like the barren fig-tree.

I stopped at the Sabbath-school this noon, and talked a little to Mrs. J. F.'s and Mrs. V.'s classes. But how lifeless are all my attempts to do good! How heartless! How can I expect God to bless them to the good of any one. But God is infinitely able to use the feeblest instrumentality for the accomplishment of his glorious designs. Blessed thought! Peradventure he may use me in *some way* to bring about his noble designs. Oh may he do it.

Loves domestic toil.—Little attentions pleasing when from home.

Monday, 10th. I have undertaken a little house-cleaning to-day, and have borne it very well. It is work I love to do, while health has prevented my attending to it since I became a housekeeper, and I felt as pleased as a child to-day, to be able not only to oversee, but to use my own exertions a little."

"*May* 13*th.*

MY VERY DEAR FATHER,—I am gratified to learn you called on Mrs. ——, and invited her to take tea with you, and also to go to church, even though she could not accept. It is pleasant to receive some little attentions of the kind when visiting our friends. I know this by experience. * * * I went to B—— last week, as you probably learned through Mrs. F., to attend the installation of Rev. Mr. B. The services were deeply interesting. I hoped to see Dr. Tucker and a delegate there, but your church was not represented. Dr. T. was expected to preach; but we had a very good sermon from Rev. Mr. Tracy of Sutton. * * * Most of the owners of the factories were present. It seemed pleasant to recognize Providence faces in the congregation. * * * The owners agree to give —— a good salary, a horse, and the rent of a house which is now being built. I think he will be pleasantly and favorable situated. * * *

I have no news to communicate. We are in usual health, and unite in sending love to you and mother, and each of our brothers and sisters.

Ever your affectionate daughter, REBECCA."

"*Providence, May* 21*st.*

MY DEAREST HUSBAND,—Nothing makes up for your absence. There is an 'aching void,' which even Provi-

Thankful for suggestion "to remember her station as a minister's wife."

dence cannot fill. As I cannot see you, I am delighted to think I can hold converse with you on paper. You reached home earlier than I anticipated. What a dreary ride you must have had. I thought of you all the afternoon, and felt sadly in view of your loneliness. I knew it would be cold and blustering, but I did not think you would be so troubled to keep warm. I fancy you did not feel much like attending a wedding that evening.

Don't get sick in gardening, for it would be far better to let your garden suffer, than to suffer yourself in making it.

I thank you for your timely suggestion in relation to my being a *minister's wife*. I am very prone to forget myself with old friends, which I ought not to do. I *will be on my guard*, and endeavor to know my station.

I think you had a job to scratch out all the commas unnecessarily inserted in your sermon. I will try to improve in the next I copy for you."

The following are extracts from her journal and from letters written during this visit at Providence:—

"Went shopping a little, and then visited the 1st Baptist church, which is dressed in mourning, for President Harrison. A great deal of taste is displayed. It is done at the expense of the City, and presents an imposing spectacle. * * *

Went to a monthly prayer-meeting of the Missionary Society this afternoon, at Dea. Chapin's. Good meeting; seventeen present. I am interested in that Society; was once its secretary. Intelligence from the Constantinople mission communicated.

I think of going to the maternal meeting this afternoon, and get some hints for our own meetings.

Disgusted with earth.—Converses with an Irish girl upon religion.

I have attended meeting and Sabbath-school all day at High-street church. Visited the infant class, and by request of the teacher addressed the children, and prayed with them, at the opening of the school. There were about seventy-five children present. Rev. Mr. Leavitt, of the Richmond-street church, preached this morning, in exchange with Mr. Parker. I was very much interested in his discourse.

I see so much of the vanity of earth that I am disgusted with it, and bless God that *my* whole concern is not 'what shall I eat, what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed?' I have been brought to look into eternity so often, and have had the subject of death before my mind so much, that I find comparatively little happiness in worldly things. I am never so happy as when living near my Saviour.

Had a conversation with an Irish girl, a Catholic. I found she did not know how to read, and I offered to read a chapter in the Bible to her. She appeared pleased with the proposal, and I read the third chapter of St. John's gospel; urged her to repent, and come to Jesus, who *alone* could pardon sin; told her how very wicked her heart was, and unless she was born again, she could not be saved. Endeavored to be faithful to her soul, and then prayed with her. She appeared grateful for the interest I manifested in her welfare, and repeatedly *expressed* her gratitude. May the Lord bless the feeble effort, and make her a child of his own for Christ's sake.

I visited the grave-yard, and was permitted to drop the tear of affection over the new-made grave of my dear departed brother. It afforded me a melancholy satisfaction to do so. There I viewed the graves of two dear brothers and three dear sisters."

Notice of vernal changes.—Reformed drunkards.

"*Hopkinton, June 5th.*

VERY DEAR PARENTS,—Though I am hardly yet settled, after two or three weeks absence, I must lay aside other duties for awhile, and just say I am safely at home again. Part of Wednesday we found excessively warm, in our ride, but on the whole we had quite a comfortable day. We stopped two or three times to rest ourselves and the horse, and rode leisurely through the day, feeling in no haste. We reached home about seven o'clock.

Great changes had taken place in the country during my absence, and now it looks beautifully. Our garden looks well. The trees are all likely to live which have been set out this spring.

There are two or three of the Boston reformed drunkards expected here next week, to address our citizens on temperance."

To her father.—June 10th.

"We have had Messrs. R. and O'B., delegates of the Washington Temperance Society in Boston, with us for a day or two. They lectured Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, and Wednesday and Thursday they visited some of our tipplers, and tried to persuade them to abandon their cups, telling their own happy experience in this business. I hope they will do good here. Mr. R. was an old *sailor*, and told some tough stories. They are interesting men; one forty and the other sixty years old. I think they cannot fail to do good."

To her mother.—June 14th.

"We have had three mails since Wednesday, and not a syllable have I heard from home. Perhaps you can *con-*

Anxiety to hear from sick friends.—Urges to invite Mr. Hawkins to Providence.

ceive of my anxiety, but I cannot *describe* it. What is the reason I do not hear from you sick ones? It will be a lesson to me, when I am sick, I think! I will not keep you all anxious, when a few lines might furnish all the relief necessary! When I have been too sick to sit up, I have often, *lying down*, with my *knee* raised and my portfolio *on* my knee, continued to *write to Providence*, lest *you* might be anxious about *me!* * * *

We hope to have a fine celebration on the 4th of July. We have a find band of music engaged; the children are to learn some temperance songs to sing; and there will be a few short addresses to the children; after which they are to partake of refreshments prepared for their use. They will form in the church, at ten o'clock, and march in procession to the grove in the rear of our house, where their exercises will all be held. We have a committee of eleven, to make all needful arrangements. C. and I. are of that number. The ladies say they 'do not expect or wish me to perform much labor, but are anxious I should help them in their plans.'

On Saturday I listened with profound interest to one of the Baltimore reformed drunkards, Mr. John Hawkins. I wish you would have Mr. Hawkins go to Providence. I think he would do good among those who are now notorious drunkards, and I am sure all would like him."

"*Westfield, June* 23, 1841.

MY DEAREST PARENTS,—I have been thinking you would like to hear from your wandering children, and while Calvin is gone to a business meeting, I will improve my leisure in addressing you. I wrote to E. on Saturday very hastily, for I was too busy to write much. The time I had promised myself to write to her was taken up with

Prefers *temperance* hotel, to visiting.—Seamen's concert.

visiters, who wished to see me before I left home. I regret that in my haste I omitted to request a letter to be forwarded to me at Amherst. Perhaps you may receive this in season to send to me there, for if a letter could reach Amherst by Saturday evening I should receive it, as we propose to pass the Sabbath there.

We left home on Saturday; came sixteen miles, and passed the Sabbath with friends who sent us an urgent invitation to do so. Monday morning we took an early start, and had a delightful ride of forty miles to Monson, a pleasant village, where we arrived about five o'clock. Found an excellent *temperance* hotel, where we were finely accommodated.

We ascertained there was to be a meeting in the evening, and very near us—the 'seamen's concert,'—and very gladly availed ourselves of the privilege of attending. The pastor of the church appears much interested in seamen. Calvin had met him before, and was very happy to renew an acquaintance with him. Strange as it may seem to those knowing my interest in behalf of the sailor, it is no less true, that was the *first* 'seamen's concert' I ever attended. I was much interested in the meeting.

Dr. —— and wife insisted on our passing the night with them, but we declined doing so, and returned to the hotel.

We left Monson about seven Tuesday morning, and reached Westfield about one o'clock. Springfield is a beautiful town. We walked about, as far as I felt able to do, and liked the place very much. I am pleased with the appearance of the town also. I find it a larger and more important place than I had imagined.

I have not learned the number of ministers present; should think not far from one hundred.

Called to her father's by sickness of a sister.

Last evening I listened for an hour and a half with much interest to remarks from Rev. Mr. Baird of Paris. The congregation all appeared gratified. Rev. Mr. B., of the Sandwich Islands, is to make an address to-day, and the reports from the churches are to be given. I feel rather tired, but shall attend some of the meetings."

"June 30th. Reached home at twelve, M. Found a letter from father saying sister E. was very sick yesterday, and they regard her situation as very critical. With the leave of Providence, I shall start tomorrow morning to see my friends. They have had a council of physicians.

We found on our return a great change had taken place in our neighborhood. Mrs. V., who has been visiting her children in Louisville and St. Louis, returned last Saturday to her family very sick, and on Sabbath day she bade adieu to earthly scenes, and entered on her eternal state.

Last night a large fire occurred in our neighborhood. All the buildings of Mr. N. L. were consumed, and he and his family thrown out of home."

"*Providence, July 2d.*
Friday morning.

MY DEAREST HUSBAND,—I have, in the good providence of God, been brought safely to my father's house. I had no trouble yesterday in getting along. E. V. procured a carriage for me, and attended to removing my baggage. I went immediately to the Providence depot, which I made my head-quarters, and spent a great part of the time there. I called at the office of the 'Friend of Virtue,' and saw Miss Ray, who appeared very glad to see me. Said she had been expecting to hear from you. She forwarded the proof-sheets of your sermon say a week ago.

Selects and reads promises of God to her sister.

I explained to her the reason of her not hearing from you, and she told me she had ventured to let it come out in the July number, and if there were corrections they could be made in the next number.

The physician and nurse have felt exceedingly anxious about E., and both felt her case very doubtful."

To her husband.—July 6th.

"I was with sister E. all day Saturday and Monday, and an hour or two after tea on the Sabbath. The confusion and noise of yesterday disturbed her greatly. Sabbath evening I found her in great distress of mind. She doubted her acceptance of God, and remarked her distress of mind had been as great as that of her body. I tried to console her, and repeated comforting passages of Scripture to her. She then requested to have some of the promises read to her. I selected some, and read to her,—and then Charles prayed with her. It was an affecting and melting scene. My heart was full, and there was scarcely a dry eye in the room. Yesterday she seemed more calm and tranquil. Do, my dear, pray *fervently* for her, and for us, that we may be prepared for any event which is before us. Her fever has been so high, that for several days Charles stood over her holding ice on her head, which she said seemed no colder than a person's hand. Her distress has been very great. She has taken but little notice of even her children."

"*July 7th.*

MY DEAREST HUSBAND,—Our dear Elizabeth is still alarmingly sick. The doctor told me candidly this morning, 'Her situation is *very* critical, though not *hopeless*.'

Solicits prayer in her sister's behalf.—Feelings in prospect of her death.

Dear girl, must it be that we must give her up? I fear I am unreconciled. She knows her situation. She has given up all hope herself. Her children are strong ties to bind her here. *I am well*—am better. Feel easy about *me*."

"*July 8th.*

Sister's mind is tranquil and peaceful. She says she 'resigns herself into God's hands, and knows no will but his.' She was greatly comforted yesterday by a visit from Mr. Parker, whose prayer and conversation was such as to do her good. Last evening members of the church held a special prayer-meeting in her behalf. We have all the greatest confidence in prayer, and faith to appropriate to ourselves the precious promise, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick.'"

To the same.—July 9th.

"The affectionate sympathy you manifest for me and my dear friends in this our hour of trial, is grateful indeed. We have passed through severe trials this week. After I wrote you on Wednesday, we hung around dear E., fully expecting the time of her departure drew near. Every syllable she uttered we felt was from dying lips. She had her children carried to her bed-side, to receive a mother's blessing. The scene was a melting one. I retained my self-command till the children were brought to her, and then I was forced to give full vent to my feelings, and there was not a dry eye or an unaffected heart in the room. No one thought she could live, and the doctors, though they were unwilling to pronounce her case *hopeless*, told us there was hardly a chance in her favor. Yester-

Recovery "in answer to prayer."—"Will you *be* a better Christian?"

day they had a faint hope she might get through it, and to-day they say her case has assumed a more encouraging aspect. I think last night was the crisis of her disease. She lay faint and apparently exhausted, and nothing seemed to revive her. Life seemed nearly extinct for a few hours. Yet she says she was conscious of every thing, but so exhausted she could not move a finger or make a sign, and she supposed we were leaving her to die."

Her sister soon grew better, and Mrs. W. returned to Hopkinton.

To her sister E.—Aug. 5th.

"Charles and father reported more favorably about you than I anticipated. Do you think you are aware how ill you have been? I am surprised to think how near the borders of the grave you have been, and yet have been spared. If I know what gratitude is, I think I feel *truly grateful* to God that you have not been cut down, and we left to mourn over your cold remains. Your recovery seems to be wholly in answer to prayer. I mean so far as you are recovered; indeed it seems almost miraculous. Do you feel any more love to God since he afflicted you than you did before? Can you kiss the rod that has smitten? Are you now, or are you *going to be* a better, a more consistent and devoted Christian? Remember your sick-bed promises. 'When thou vowest a vow, defer not to pay it.'

Since I last wrote you, another little immortal has been committed to your care,—thus adding to your responsibilities, which were already great. Remember this dear little one is to *live forever*. How much grace you need to ena-

able you to fit these lambs for the Saviour's fold. They may be early snatched from your hand, and this teaches you to do what you can *now* for them."

"Sept. 14th. S. M. came in to talk with me about her soul. She thinks she has given her heart to God. I conversed solemnly with her, and then we both prayed. She appears sincere, and I hope is not deceived. Tried to be faithful to her. I wrote to Willy Green yesterday."

The following is the letter referred to:—

"*Hopkinton, Sept. 13th.*

MY DEAR LITTLE WILLY,—I have been very sorry to hear how sick you have been, but am glad to learn you are better again. The Lord has been very kind in raising you up so far, and I hope you will soon get *well*, and that you and mother will come to see me. Tell her I cannot have her say *no*. She will be better if she comes, and you will be better too. Do try to come this fall.

I want to hear aunt L. is better. Give much love to her for me. I was very glad to see your aunt A. I went over to Upton early after dinner, and waited there an hour, and you cannot tell how very glad I felt to see the stage coming, and find her in it. I mean to keep her just as long as she can stay, for I promise myself a great deal of happiness in her visit. We mean to ride every day we can. I am sorry she did not bring Charley, for *you* were not well enough then to come.

Tell mother I am *much better* since I came home from Hampton. I really feel *stronger*, and I am very happy about it. Give a great deal of love to your parents, grandparents, uncles, and brother and sister. Uncle W. sends love too, to all.

Note of an inquirer.—Call from its author.—"Glad of a *storm*."

Remember, dear Willy, to give your heart to the blessed Jesus, now, while you are a little boy, for he loves little children. I must hurry. I hope to hear from the family tomorrow.

In haste, your affectionate aunt, REBECCA."

"Sabbath, 26th. As I came out of church this afternoon, Miss —— handed me a note, on which was written the following:—'Will you not pray for me, that I may be led to see my heart as it is in the sight of God; that I may be led to exercise true repentance, and to be indeed a child of God? I sometimes fear that I am left to hardness of heart.' This is an encouraging omen, and I pray that I may have a heart to pray for her, and that she may be speedily brought to know Jesus.

Oct. 5th. I received a call from the young lady who the Sabbath previous had presented me a note, requesting me to pray for her. She came to inquire what she must do to be saved? I was interested in the interview. Found her intelligent, and manifesting an ardent desire about the salvation of her soul. Endeavored to be faithful in pointing her to the Lamb slain for sinners, and then commended her to God."

To her sister.—Oct. 6th.

"Yesterday and to-day it has stormed, and we have all kept house. I have been in the study with my work, and listened with interest to various articles which my husband has been pleased to read to me, and have enjoyed more of his society than for some time past. A minister's time is not his own, and I am always glad to have such a storm as that no one will expect Mr. W. to go out to make calls,

I read aloud in the evening, from that precious little work of 'Edwards on the Affections." Mr. W. and I had an interesting and profitable conversation respecting our own religious declension, and strove to do each other good."

She wrote on the same day, to a friend, of a meeting of ladies for prayer:—

"Several voices were there heard for the first time in prayer in the social circle. The time was all occupied. No one refused to pray, and 'preferred to be excused,' or 'rather unite with some one else.' All were ready, and the season was one of much interest. Thus you see our meetings commenced under auspicious circumstances. To draw out the feelings of these young sisters, I proposed the same question I had done on Thursday to the older sisters, 'What are some of the signs of being in Christ?' Their answers were like the following: 'A desire to grow in grace.' 'Love for souls.' 'Love for our enemies.' 'Love for Christians.' 'Love for the word of God.' 'Peculiar love for such as bear most the image of Christ.' 'We shall purify ourselves even as Christ is pure.' I trust these meetings will prove profitable."

Of a visit in a neighboring town, she wrote:—

"Rev. Mr. Phillips, of Medfield, whose ordination mother attended three years ago, is a successor of grandfather Gair's, and I was introduced to him as a *granddaughter* of Mr. Gair. He and his wife politely invited me to visit them."

She closed a note to a little boy as follows:—

"Be a good boy, and love God. Pray to him to make you good and give you a new heart. So that when you die, you can go and live with the Lord Jesus in heaven."

Soon after her journal recorded:—

"At one o'clock a company of children, from seven to fourteen years old, came here to have me talk with them about their souls. They are *interested* I think in religious things, but not convicted of sin. I talked with each, and then I prayed with them."

Another extract exhibits the cause of this desire to see *her* about their souls, although it is not known how many had received appeals like the following:—

"I hope you love to learn about God, and heaven, and to read the Holy Bible; and I hope you will love God, and give him your heart now, so that when you get older you will find God is your friend, and have something to comfort you. You are not too young to love God, and I hope you *will* repent of your sins and serve God."

To Mr. W.—Providence, Nov. 9th.

"What abundant reason have we to bless and praise the Lord, for what he has done and is still doing in our midst here, in saving souls."

After allusions to the conversion of several friends, the sickness of a sister at her father's, she adds:—

"If I know my heart, I feel to bless and magnify the name of the Lord, for such rich displays of his sovereign mercy. My heart has not lost the fervor of its love by being absent from home just now. No, I have enjoyed nearness of access to the mercy-seat. I have loved to pour out my soul in secret prayer, for you and the dear people with whom our interests are so happily identified."

To her parents.—Hopkinton, Nov. 19th.

"I am happy to say, I found a very interesting state of things when I came home. The interest has been increasing; the impressions deepening. We feel that the Lord has done great things for us, whereof we rejoice.

There is to be a ball Thanksgiving evening at the coffee-house; and the church are to hold a prayer-meeting at the same time to pray for those who attend it. The spirit is evidently operating on many hearts. Some families have had three or four conversions in them. I think now of four such families."

To her mother—Dec. 2d.

"Attention to religion is rather increasing. Several new instances of conviction have occurred lately which now bid fair to be abiding. Several influential men have lately given themselves to the service of the Lord, and we are hoping their example will be followed by others. There seems, also, to be a hearing ear. Our meetings on the Sabbath are unusually full, and the Sabbath evening meetings have been crowded,—so much so, that our vestry was overflowed, and some were compelled to go away because they could not get in, after the seats, aisles, and pulpit were all literally filled. We were constrained last Sabbath evening to hold our meeting in the upper part of the house, which we dreaded, lest there should be want of freedom in speaking; but we found the truth verified, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The meeting was one of deep interest. Some of the men whose hearts the Lord has lately turned to himself, arose and testified to what he had done for their souls, and exhorted

others to repent and believe. One said 'he had faithfully served the devil more than thirty years, and now he hoped he should serve his *new Master* as well.' He is as humble as a little child; says he is a mere babe, and knows nothing, and cannot step alone. He appears well. One begged his friends to reflect on their condition, and to be reconciled to God; told them, '*if he* had got religion, they could get it, for it was the easiest thing in the world to love and serve God.' One is now rejoicing over the hopeful conversion of his aged mother, seventy-five years old. Her case is interesting. After living seventy-five years in sin, scarcely ever having a serious thought, the Lord has appeared in mercy, and convicted her deeply of her sins, and led her to trust in the Saviour. Not only has he blessed her in her own soul; but she rejoices, too, in the recent conversion of *one son*, *three grand-children*, and *one great-grand-child*. I think it a very interesting case. The work is the Lord's, and the glory shall be given to his name. I rejoice with great joy for the rich manifestations of God's presence among us. There is a manifest difference in the prayers of Christians from what we saw and heard a few months ago; and they labor in season and out of season to bring sinners to Christ. Special efforts for sinners seems to be blest of God."

To a 'dear sister in Christ,' at Providence.—Dec. 7th.

"The ladies' prayer-meetings are well attended. The young ladies have met regularly Saturday afternoons, and have averaged eighteen at each meeting. We always have from fifteen to twenty prayers, and no one refuses to pray.

"Finds all willing to be urged to repentance."—Close of 1841.

Six male heads of families are among the converts, all of whom have erected the family altar on which the morning and evening incense ascends. We feel that we are having a blessed visit from the Holy Spirit. There is scarcely a person to whom the Christian may not make a direct and pungent appeal. The fact is, we may say what we wish to impenitent sinners, and they will receive it kindly, and we see the silent tear stealing down the cheek. I have been out calling on individuals this week, and found deep feeling,—and many were affected to tears, and wished me to pray with them.

My dear A., I could write much more, but time fails, and I must hasten to close. Pray for us. Write soon, and believe me, your affectionate sister, in Christ,

R. G. WEBSTER."

On the last evening of 1841, she wrote:—

"The year is closing. What have I done for God? He has done much for me, and I have great reason to be grateful. My life, my health, and those of my husband, have been spared. I am comparatively well.

I have read all of God's holy word this year; but to what profit? I fear I have read it too hastily and carelessly. May he guide me in reading it the coming year."

She was in the habit of reading the Scriptures through regularly in course. A Bible which she most frequently used contains a memorandum, stating that she had begun to read *that copy* through the ninth time.

CHAPTER XVII.

MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS DISCLOSING HER MATURED VIEWS AND FEELINGS.

HAD that been deemed best, this volume might have consisted entirely, as most Memoirs do, of letters of *description*, *reasoning*, and *advice*. There are ample materials of that character. But as "*life* is made of little things," *they* best portray *character*. The vividness of romance is secured by their combination. Her every-day experience, therefore, has been sought for, and in the preceding pages presented to the reader, in *connection* with the *thoughts* which accompanied passing events. The effort to give this whole narrative, as far as possible, in her own words, may have marred the clearness of the picture thus designed. But the aim has been to interest the reader *in looking at Mrs. Webster as she was*, and not in elegancies of style, not in wonderful details of adventure. The consecutive chain of incident is interrupted in this chapter, to enable the reader to perceive her modes of thought more clearly, by a collection of paragraphs, on different subjects, written at various periods in her last years.

Presents.

She viewed "presents of friends" as valuable means of *testifying affection*. She always *returned thanks* for even small favors. With this view, she *gave* as well as received

God the real source of our *gifts*.

many such tokens. Some of the following are specimens of her written responses after receiving them, being generally accompanied by Christian counsel:—

"My wants have always been, and are still supplied from the bountiful hand of our Heavenly Father. All I receive, I regard as from his hand, though they came *through* the hands of kind and benevolent friends."

"We shall ever rejoice that Providence directed those two runaway slaves here, and that we were permitted to give a cup of cold water to some of these the least of Christ's disciples. They came to us almost naked, and we clothed them; hungry, and we fed them; strangers, and we took them in; and we hope the Lord will accept our feeble attempts to do them good."

"At the close of the fast meeting yesterday, Mr. D. requested the church to remain after the pastor should retire,—when they voted, unanimously, to make us a donation visit, and appointed a committee to make necessary arrangements. They propose to come between this and thanksgiving, which they will decide upon on Monday evening. We are *gratified*, I assure you, with the proposition, and shall gladly welcome *all* to our house."

"I should like to have you see the cup —— was kind enough to present our little boy. It is very handsome, and we are both very much gratified with this gift, and I hope *grateful* for this remembrance of him."

"Mr. W. and I *thank* you *very much* for the deposit you have so kindly made in the savings' bank, for our dear little son. I hope he will by and by be able to thank you himself."

"*I thank you very much* for the package; every thing it contained will be useful and valuable. Several of the things I had placed on my memorandum to purchase the first convenient opportunity."

"Mr. W. and I both *feel* and *wish* to *express* our *gratitude* for the new-year's presents. They are *very acceptable* and very *valuable*."

In further illustration of her use and value of "*presents*," the reader will here please to turn to the note to her father, which introduces chapter nineteen, and which, in presenting a gift, so delicately suggests her anticipation of soon leaving this world,—and also to that to her aunt Bartlett near the commencement of the same chapter. She was accustomed, after "receiving or giving *presents*," to "thank God for *his* favor in giving *friends* to *render* presents *precious*."

Christian Appeal, in behalf of Family Worship.

"Oh the blessing of family worship. After enjoying it for three years, I could not be denied it. A family without an altar, seems like a house without a roof. You would enjoy religion better yourself, and the influence of daily worship on the family would be happy I think. And might you not reasonably hope that were you to establish it, salvation might be *more likely* to come to your dwelling, and your unconverted children be saved? You have trials which are great and afflictive, but were you to collect your family together, morning and evening, and bow together at the mercy seat, and unite in praying that these trials might be removed, or sanctified—would there not be greater reason to hope for such a result. God says, 'Where two

or three agree, as touching a point, it shall be done to them.' It seems to be so desirable, that I wish I could prevail on you to commence, so that yours may not be numbered among the 'families that call not on his name,'—and by so doing avert the judgment which God has threatened upon such—Jeremiah x, 25.

I trust you will not consider me *assuming* in presenting this subject, for I write out of the fulness of my heart. I know this is *one way* in which *religion is revived.* And if you, and others similarly situated, attend to such duties, which have been neglected, you will experience a gracious revival of religion in your own hearts, your families, and all around you. If what I have written is *worthy of consideration, treat it so;* if not, throw it aside; but beware, lest you reject it without duly weighing the importance of it."

Consecration to God.

"What else is worth living for, but to do good and glorify God? I believe Christians don't *half live*, except in time of revivals. Then when they are honoring God, he will honor them."

Maternal duty.

"The duties of a mother are *pleasant*, but *responsible.* There are trials, however, in bringing up children, and many hours when a mother feels sad in view of her responsibility. How often it is difficult to decide what is *duty*, in respect to them. How can any *mother* doubt for a moment the entire depravity of the human heart? I am firmly persuaded of its truth."

Slavery is sin.

"From my heart I rejoice to hear that High-street church have taken action in reference to American slavery. I am pleased with the result of your discussion. It is time the churches should come out, and say, *Slavery* is a *sin*, and we will have no fellowship with it."

Choice of Rulers.

"I want to have the *best man* ruler of our nation, be it Clay, Polk, Birney, or any other man. I would that he be a man of prayer, and one who would rule in the fear of God, hating iniquity."

Proper feelings of mourners.

"I was astonished and grieved to hear of ——'s death. But why do I say *grieved?* Should a Christian be *grieved* when a fellow-Christian finishes his or her work here, and goes to God, to be forever free from sin? No, we should rejoice, that she is done with the trials and vicissitudes of this life, and entered upon her rest. I would not mourn on *her* account, but for her afflicted, bereaved husband, her motherless babes, her widowed mother, her brothers and sisters, I would weep and mourn."

Infatuation of mankind.

"These are poor dying bodies, subject to pain and distress, and will by and by moulder to dust. Yet how much more careful are we of them than of the precious gem which they contain, which is *imperishable*, *immortal*. How infinitely more precious and valuable is the soul than the body, and yet we live as if our bodies were immortal. What strange, what infatuated beings we are."

"Congregationalists behind in seeking extension."—Notices from the pulpit.

Churches' and Pastors' duties.

That she thought much and conversed and wrote much respecting "church responsibilities," and "ministerial duties," is already evident from previous pages. In the following paragraphs the same fact is more clearly presented:—

"I wonder a minister should not be satisfied to *do well.* If all the people under his charge were converted, why then he might begin to think of seeking a *larger field* of labor; till then, I should think it best to be *content.*"

"I think *Congregationalists* need to wake up. They are *behind* the other denominations, I think, in seeking *extension.*"

There is more truth in the following hint respecting *acceptableness as necessary to success*, than some metaphysical preachers seem to realize:—

"I am extremely pleased to hear that —— has given such satisfaction in his late labors in P. I do not regret he has determined to preach the gospel, especially if he is an *acceptable* preacher. If his hearers *like* his preaching, he will be far more likely to be a *successful* minister."

Her views respecting the efforts of some to make the pulpit the advertising stand of error, are next presented:—

"I am glad if you felt interested in my description of the oppressed fugitives we have recently sheltered and aided on their way to freedom's happy land. Would you not judge from that we were *friends* to the enslaved? But Abby Kelly is here—in town somewhere—and is lec-

turing on all kinds of topics, but especially denouncing my husband, as a 'slaveholder, a baby-stealer, and trundle-bed robber;' 'a scribe, pharisee, and hypocrite;' 'one that sits in Moses' seat, but is a liar, a drunkard, and a dangerous man in the community.' Her forces seem to be aimed *particularly* at *him*, probably because he did not read a notice of her lecture of Sabbath evening, last Sabbath afternoon. Her practice has ever been to denounce the *church* and *clergy*, and it would be strange for a minister to tell his people that she was to hold forth against himself and them on that evening, and thus encourage or sanction such a proceeding."

The following was addressed to a recent college graduate:—

"If my husband was instrumental in any way of leading you to turn your attention to the ministry, I am sure I rejoice, and so does he. I rejoice in your decision, and hope you may never repent it. I am also gratified that you have resolved to 'prepare yourself for the work with God's assistance, without reference to any *particular* part of it, and then trust to his providence to point out the way.' I think that is the right course to pursue—not *decide what you will do*, and then insult God by asking *his* direction when the matter is all settled. I hope you will be willing to go east or west, north or south, as God shall mark out your course. Should my life be spared, I hope yet to hear you preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Keep low at his feet, and *follow him.*

I trust if you become a minister of the gospel, you will enlist heartily in all the reforms of the present day, and be a *leader* in them among your people. Let them see that *you* are right, and they will follow you. Ministers have

Answers question, "What a minister's wife should be?"

an unbounded influence over their flocks, and can easily turn the current of feeling into the right channel if they are *wise*."

She wrote to a candidate for the ministry who had sought her advice:—

"I am glad to hear you are going on with your course of study, and hope it will be my pleasure to hear you preach at some future day. I suppose you will soon close your first theological year. The *last two* will go rapidly. As to the subject of matrimony, to which you allude, I think you have no occasion to hasten. I approve of *one year's* engagement, which gives the parties fair time to become acquainted; but longer than that I cannot recommend, especially where a gentleman is pursuing a course of study. The tendency of it will be to divert the mind from study, and when one has nearly finished his studies, he is better fitted to choose his helpmeet. Then, he knows what he is to be, and do, and what course to pursue. A lady may be admirably fitted for a merchant's, or a lawyer's wife, who would in no respect be qualified for a minister's wife, in my humble opinion. You inquired what I thought necessary qualifications in a wife. You mean, I suppose, a minister's wife, and I shall therefore confine my remarks to such. I have been a minister's wife for five and a half years, and I am daily seeing so many defects in my own character and life that I cannot now amend without the greatest care, or I would rather say, cannot amend at all, that I feel quite solicitous that young clergymen, or those who mean to become so, should not fall into error in selecting their bosom companions.

I think then, to begin, the first qualification should be deep-toned piety,—such piety as will be ready to sacrifice

A minister's wife should make up her mind to be happy.

much—yea all, for Christ. Cheerfulness, affability, neatness, regularity and system in all things; such a disposition as will bend to peculiarities, for there are many such in every parish; a contented mind; a readiness to engage in good things, such as benevolent enterprises, female circles for prayer, Sabbath-school enterprise, etc. I think a minister's wife should *make up her mind* to be happy, and try to make herself useful, wherever the providence of God shall cast the lot of her husband, and shew the people of his parish she feels an interest in them. If practicable, she may do much, I think, in visiting with her husband; and in one respect she can get access to hearts no other lady in the church can do. People expect their pastor's wife to be faithful in conversing with them, and they will bear it of her, and respect her for it, when they will not kindly receive such advice from many others. Thus she has it in her power to do much good.

I know of no young lady whom I could recommend as possessing all these qualities. If I should chance to see one, I will remember you."

One who was disposed to object to her husband's publicly proclaiming his opposition to slavery, was answered thus:—

"I mentioned to —— Mr. W.'s text on the Sabbath the slaves were here, when he preached on 'the duty of protecting and aiding oppressed fugitives.' You will find the words in Deut. xxiii, 15, and Isaiah xvi, 3, 4. Please *read them and see* if he could not get his *subject* out of the *text*."

Power of religion seen in a dying scene.

She thus describes a Christian's death-bed:—

"After meeting, Mr. W. was sent for to visit a sick lady who wished to see him, and who had requested prayers in the afternoon. He found her stretched on her bed, apparently near death. She reached out her hand, and with a cheerful countenance said, 'I am glad to see you, Mr. Webster; my mind is at rest; I have *perfect peace.*' 'Jesus was the only ground of her hope, and she could leave herself in his hands, willing to live or to die.' She was cheerful and happy. All hope of recovery was gone. She knew her situation perfectly, and that she would probably die in a few hours. Yet it was a delightful scene. Around her were her mourning husband, her three children who would soon be motherless, her parents, her sister, and friends. They all were weeping. She alone tearless.

What but *religion* could do all this? Nothing, no, nothing! At the rising of the sun this morning the church bell tolled her death knell. She is gone. Her spirit is with its God. At the early age of twenty-five years, she has bid adieu to earth and its scenes, and gone to enjoy the presence of her Saviour and her God."

Of one who had refused to hear Christian admonition, she wrote:—

"If —— is *determined* to lose her soul, why I cannot help it. If I could persuade her to repent of sin and turn to Jesus, how gladly would I do it. My soul is burdened now while I write, when I think of her state,—a careless, hardened, proud sinner, and unwilling to hear *one word* about a way she may be *happy*, and *holy*, and *useful*—*happy for time and eternity.* But she will not come to Christ, that she may have life.

Proposes prayer after tea each day for a friend.—View of newspaper eulogy.

Dear ——, we can *pray for her*, and though we are so full of sin ourselves, peradventure, for the sake of Jesus, who is *pure* from sin, we may be heard and answered. Let us meet at the throne of grace, *after tea* each day, and commend *her* to God."

A newspaper eulogy elicited the following:—

"I was surprised somewhat, though much gratified, to learn so favorable an account of Mr. ——'s 'spirituality.' I rather supposed he was a *worldly*-minded man. But *if* '*he was* a truly devoted Christian,' doubtless '*his lamp was trimmed* and burning, and he ready to *meet* the Son of man.'"

Her sympathy with one much older than herself, thus tenderly points the sufferer to the Redeemer:—

"I hope soon to hear that you are very much better. I have thought much of you this last week. It must be a great trial *to you* to be confined at home by sickness, but I trust you are patient and cheerful under the dealings of a kind Providence, and feel that he who orders all things is only chastising you in love and mercy. You have heretofore been blessed richly in the enjoyment of good health, while all your family have shared largely in feeble health. I hope you are careful of yourself, and *above all* hope the dear Saviour is very precious to you, and that his grace will *enable* you to bear all your trials meekly and patiently."

She referred to the scene of her early religious impressions thus:—

"I should like to hear Dr. Tucker's century sermon. There will be much in it of a very interesting nature I have no doubt, and I shall ever feel a *different* interest in

that church from what I can in any other. It was there I found the Saviour to be precious, and there I covenanted to be the Lord's. All my early religious associations are connected with that old brick church and vestry."

She associated *error* and *sorrow*, as the following sentences show, referring to one who had renounced essential truths:—

"I wonder Mr. —— *could* go to Providence to assist in an installation of a *Unitarian minister*. I hope his hearing Mr. Finney will do him good. *Poor, unhappy* man! I pity him."

The following paragraphs are introduced as a faint delineation of that *raciness* and *vivacity in conversation*, which all who know her will recognize, but which she rarely exhibited on paper:—

"I left Mrs. B——'s at three o'clock, and chatted with the *driver*. I imagine I was *very agreeable*. I feel rather tired of course. *I exhibited myself on the stage*, as you might suppose I would do; got out on *Cumberland Hill to rest*."

"When we came here four years ago, there were more than a dozen places licensed to sell intoxicating drinks; now there is *not one*. The 'coffee-house' is refused a license this year, though one man said there *should* be one procured at *any* rate, even though it should cost *him* $100. I rejoice that that man has *got outwitted once*, I presume it is the *first* time. All about us seem to rejoice in his defeat. He went to Cambridge that terrible stormy Tuesday of last week, to get a license, but failed in it *even then*."

"Careless doers."—Mothers' welcome home.

"This with us is a season for *marrying*. In the summer it seemed to be a season for *burying*. Mr. W. married two couples last week, and two this. Three couples came here to be married. Wednesday evening he married a man whose wife died a few months ago. He 'had *children*,' I suppose, and '*thought he needed a wife*.'"

"We had a comfortable ride on Wednesday. I feel badly to have your carriage so muddy, because the mud might have been avoided a greater part of the way. But *my cautions* were soon forgotten by the boy, and after worrying some time about it, I seemed to hear *you preach*, 'Fret not thyself because of *careless* doers,' and then I made the best of it."

"You would have been amused on Tuesday, could you have peeped on us. Nine of us, members of the Maternal Association, hired a large wagon with three seats, drawn by two horses, and rode over to P. F.'s, and held a maternal meeting. We had fifteen present, and enjoyed the meeting. On our return, as we stopped at the different houses to leave the mothers, in each front door stood a little cherub to welcome its mother home. I was left last, and 'a little tot' stood at the gate glad enough to *see me*."

She often gave advice like this:—

"Tell Mrs. ——, I heartily congratulate her on the happy change in her family; she is blessed indeed! I think if she is faithful to her husband, *converses with him*, and *prays with him*, he too will be converted."

Circus' noise and uproar.—Effect of deaths on her mind.

In her thoughts *nature* always was associated with *man*, as this extract suggests:—

"This is a boisterous day. I have thought of the poor sailor, exposed to the severities of winter, and compared my situation with his, and felt grateful that I am where I am. I rejoice, dear ——, that your seafaring days are ended, and that we are not now feeling that you are exposed to the perils of the ocean, and kept in suspense respecting you. After all, though your family have been, and are still afflicted, you can sing of mercy, and remember the blessings are *infinitely more* than the chastisements."

The mode of her effort to secure right views respecting improper amusements, is seen in the following, from a letter to a young friend. She *chose her words* for this purpose:—

"We have had a summer's day, and we are not a little *annoyed* with a *circus* on the common, from whence issues all sorts of *noises*, bewitching not only children, but many men of the *baser* sort, and such women, not a few. Our Calvin and Willy Green seem to manifest no kind of disposition to be with the multitude. This is pleasing to us. They are satisfied to sit at the door and *hear* the *uproar*."

The general effect of deaths upon her mind is seen in another extract. In reference to two widowed fathers she wrote:—

"How gloomy and sad it must be now at their houses. I do sympathize with them as far as I can, without being similarly afflicted. God grant I may never know by experience what it is to be thus afflicted. As I sat in the church, reflecting on the solemnities of the occasion, I said

to myself, whose funeral obsequies will be *next* performed in this house? And I thought perhaps *my own*. God only knows. 'Secret things belong to God.'

She did not feel, as some seem to do, that slander is "*never to be refuted.*"

"I wrote Charles respecting the publication of those slanderous resolutions, and their appendages. I have tried to get a 'Statesman' to send to you, but could not, and have consequently copied them, and will take them with me to Providence, for you to read. The temperance party are intending to take some action, I am told, during our absence, to set things in a little fairer light. So far as Mr. Webster is *known*, I have no fear respecting the slander; but such an article, in the eyes of *strangers*, must appear strangely, and *needs some explanation*. It is certainly a most malicious thing, but I trust good will be accomplished by it."

She viewed *quarrels* in *churches* as preludes to the *dismission* of *ministers*.

"How are you getting along in your church? There was a gentleman here this morning, who said he thought Mr. —— must leave you soon. Is it so? I hope you are not going to have trouble in the church or society. I rejoice that we are not suffering under parish difficulties. A delightful spirit of union prevails among our church and parish. Persons who are best acquainted with the state of affairs here, say that there are no two members of our church at variance with each other, nor any with their pastor. I mention this fact because it is quite uncommon now for churches to be free from difficulties. I have now

in my mind four churches in this region who *are quarrelling*, and the result will doubtless be the *dismission of the ministers*."

She thus speaks of deceived church members:—

"Would to God that cold-hearted *professors* might be revived and quickened, that some who are clinging to *old hopes* because they love to cherish them, although to all human appearance they have no reason to hope they are Christians,—that such might examine the foundation of their hopes, and if *false*, *banish them*. It is to be lamented that many in our churches are giving no evidence of change of heart, and thus bringing reproach upon the cause of Christ. I fear there are many who profess to be Christians, who never bow the knee in prayer to God. And can such be Christians? What! a *prayerless* Christian? Never, no, never."

That she adhered firmly to *infant baptism* and to *sprinkling*, is seen below:—

"I cannot but regret that Beneficent and High-street churches are becoming *Baptists*. I rather wonder they are disposed to practice immersion. Although I was myself immersed, I feel now that it is very desirable our Congregational churches should be *pedobaptists*,—and were I to be baptized now, I should be sprinkled. I believe that is *sufficient;* although I doubt not the *validity* of immersion of course. I think, with a little labor on the part of the pastors, the candidates would feel that the *mode* is quite unessential, and consequently sprinkling would suffice. And again, if that mode is practised, there will be few *infant consecrations*, which will be deplorable. I am a strong advocate for infant baptism, and have been for six

or eight years, but especially the last year. The revival we have been enjoying has strengthened my faith, when I see how many children of the covenant have been brought into the fold of Jesus. But I have not time to *discuss the subject.* I love the Baptists, and desire their prosperity, but I love our Congregational churches too, and want to see their faith preserved. I am in favor of *Puritanism.*"

All other consolation seemed to be unavailing save that drawn from Christ. The children of sorrow often received advice like that here quoted from a letter to a sick friend:—

"I hope you enjoy the light of God's countenance, and find it good to draw near to him. If you ever need a Saviour's arm upon which you can lean, I think you do now. I hope you have it. 'Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you.'"

The following is her report of a revival, and shows what points appeared to her most deserving of notice in such a work of grace:—

"We have been enjoying a harvest-season the last five months. More than a hundred souls are hoping in the mercy of God, who a few months since were living 'without hope and without God in the world.' Several were skeptical, two infidels, many opposers to religion, some self-righteous, and many very thoughtless, careless persons. Sixteen or eighteen new family altars have been erected, on which the morning and evening sacrifice daily ascends. Eighteen or twenty husbands and wives now are accustomed to pray together frequently aside from family worship. Several families are accustomed, every Sabbath after supper, to assemble together, when the father, mother,

Eighty converts in the Sabbath-school.—A daughter leads her father to Christ.

and each *converted child* will severally address the throne of grace, and thus have a family prayer-meeting. Christians 'speak often one to another' of the things relating to the kingdom, and I believe are very generally faithful in conversing and praying with the impenitent. More than eighty of the converts belong to the Sabbath-school. One scholar, who indulged hope a few months since, felt anxious for her impenitent father, and urged him to attend the meetings; he did not even go Sabbath days. She at length hired him to go one evening. He went, once and again, and again, and finally was convicted of his sins, and brought to bow to the Lord Jesus. He attributes his conversion to the faithful efforts and example of his pious child. He now maintains family prayer, and intends to unite with the church soon, and have all his children consecrated to God. There are five hopeful conversions in one family—father, mother, and three adult children. One was awakened under a sermon preached in November, I think, from the text, 'Ye are of your father, the devil.' Another was awakened by the reading of the tract, 'Have me excused.' The work seems to be the work of the Holy Spirit. A district three miles from us—half way to Upton, right of the turnpike—which we call 'Bear Hill,' is now experiencing the influences of the Spirit. It has been noted for its infidelity and wickedness, and in the revival of 1831, it remained unaffected. But the Lord is there now, and I think there is more interest there than in any other part of the town."

She expected to see 'Satan come down in great wrath, when souls fled from his chain,' and states with grateful surprise:—

"In this shower of grace there is very little *opposition*.

There has been but *one* ball since our revival commenced, which is quite *remarkable*. The young men, who are opposed at heart to vital religion, have got up a kind of theatre, which tends to divert the minds of some. But the 'Lord reigneth,' and he is able to 'make the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he will restrain."

"Deafness," and the habit of "speaking inaudibly at prayer-meeting," she would use "not as arguments for *staying away*, but of *shades* to throw out more clearly outlines of mercies." She adds:—

"I cannot but lament that you find so much difficulty in hearing at your meetings. You could enjoy much more, I know, if you could hear all the exercises; but you have many blessings left, though so great a one is taken from you, and I hope you will *dwell* more on the *mercies*, than the *chastisements*. It does one good to think much, and talk much of the mercies of God, and compare our circumstances with those from whom many blessings are denied."

She set a high value upon *neighborhood meetings*, and drew great encouragement from full attendance at them:—

"We attended a neighborhood prayer-meeting last evening in a district a mile and a half from us, at a private house, and had a solemn meeting. More than seventy present, and some there who never go to church. I trust the spirit of the Lord sent them there. A fortnight ago we went into a more remote district, and the rooms were literally crowded, so that they have been constrained to seek for more commodious quarters. 'The bridegroom is with us, and why should we *fast?*'"

"Revival promotes her *health*."—Ladies' meetings in six districts.

The influence of the revival seemed to promote her health. She writes to a friend who was also "in a revival:"—

"I hear you have been quite ill. The revival here seems to have done much towards establishing *my* health, but the revival in Providence seems to have made you sick. It don't agree with you, as it does with my invalid neighbor —— and myself. I have often told my husband, 'it had done me more good than medicine.' I believe your last revival you were sick. But it is trying, is it not, to be laid aside at such an interesting season. God seems to say to you by it, that he needs none of your *public* labors. I trust you are patient under the chastisement, and can kiss the hand that smites you. I am glad to hear you are so far recovered."

She regarded "*means* as *essential to* conversion, though *not* conversion,' and was therefore glad to state:—

"We hold six ladies' prayer-meetings on Thursday afternoon, each week in different sections of the town, for the convenience of our sisters who have been obliged to come three and four miles to meet with us. The one held here averages about twenty each week; and the other five perhaps would average thirty more; so that I presume we have fifty sisters each Thursday, who meet for prayer. Thirty have been added to our church fellowship, and more will come at our next communion. I ought to have said, that it is a rare thing for any sister or young convert to refuse to pray in our meetings on Thursdays. We often have sixteen and eighteen prayers at one meeting, and we only meet an hour and a half."

Selections of this chapter from 400 letters.—"Town moved."

The plan and limits of this compilation forbid the introduction of other extracts of a similar character. Through these the reader may obtain an idea of a large portion of her correspondence. They have been selected, it is proper to add, from more than four hundred letters, which abound in similar exhibitions of matured thought.

CHAPTER XVIII.

INCIDENTS OF HER HISTORY IN 1842, 3, 4, AND 5.

ALL which it is important for the reader to know of her *history* during this period, as developing character, is suggested by the following extracts from her letters, selected from several hundred dated during these years.

At different dates in 1842, she wrote:—

"The Lord has blessed us richly. The work advances. It has extended the last few weeks to remote parts of the town. Two young ladies on whom I called Tuesday, three miles distant, said they should come to the inquiry meeting next evening, even if they were obliged to walk. The town is moved. There has never been so general a work in the place as at present. We are constrained in looking about us to exclaim, what hath *God* wrought! I could give you some very interesting facts, if I should see you, which I cannot write out now."

None but ordinary means used in revival.—Candidates received.

"Solemn day yesterday with us. In fact all our meetings are solemn and impressive. We feel that the Lord is still blessing us. New cases of interest or conversion are often occurring, and the minds of the community are seriously affected. Surely we have abundant cause for thankfulness to God. I hope he will long abide with us, and I see no reason why we may not hope for and expect it. We have as yet had no extra preaching or means of grace. The Lord has blessed the ordinary means of grace, and blessed them abundantly."

"I think you would enjoy a visit here now more than usual. Do try to come, and if you *can*, I should love to have you come next week, and be with us on the Sabbath, (I speak to *both of you* now,) and calculate to be here too *one Wednesday at least*, so as to attend our public prayer-meeting, held at the time of the inquiry meeting. You can judge better than I can tell you then of their interest."

"I spoke to two young ladies last evening coming out of meeting, and both wept freely, and told me they felt more yesterday than ever, and desired more than any thing to become Christians, and wished to be prayed for."

"Yesterday we received into our communion twenty-five persons, ten of whom were heads of families; three husbands came with their wives; fifteen were men—*ten young men—six young ladies.* The oldest candidate was perhaps *fifty* years, and the youngest *fifteen.*"

"Temperance is rapidly advancing, and religion was *never* in so interesting state here at any time. Mr. Wood, of Upton, preached here last Sabbath, in exchange with

Mr. W., and he remarked to him when he returned, that he had been in the habit of exchanging with Hopkinton ministers for forty years, and he never spent so pleasant a day here before."

"The Parish held a meeting last Monday, and *removed all conditions* of Mr. W.'s settlement; so that now he is no longer on the six months notice plan, as when settled, but is settled in the old fashion way. It is brought about by means of the opposition raised by opposers to temperance this summer, which has awakened the energies of Mr. W.'s best friends."

1843.

"Now for my own family. We are well. In April we had a precious babe added to our circle—a fine son—whom we call John Calvin, for his father."

"*May* 23*d*.

MY DEAREST PARENTS,—How long since I wrote you! And how altered my situation from what it has hitherto been. Through the mercy of God, I now address you as the happy mother of a darling babe. It is a precious treasure committed to our care, and I need not say we all love him exceedingly."

"*June*.

My husband has been quite unwell this spring and summer, so much so as to render it important he should take a journey, and he is now exploring our western country. He left home on the fifth of July, to be absent six weeks. Rev. Mr. Sanford, of Medway, accompanied him. They have gone to Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, Chicago, etc. etc., and are to return by way of the Lakes. It will

Lonely during Mr. W.'s journey west.—"Feast of tabernacles," at Worcester

be a delightful tour, and Mr. W. writes me he has found the journey beneficial already. I felt so lonely after he left, that I took my babe and came to spend a few weeks at my father's."

Dec.

"Dr. B——'s views were changed, and he *expressed* a hope in Jesus before he died, and said he wished to *live* only to glorify the blessed Saviour. His views of Jesus were, till within a few days previous to his death, beclouded, but they became clear. His pious friends who were with him felt that his evidence of piety was not as clear as they could wish. But the Lord knows whether he was prepared or no, and that is enough. I *hope* he is in heaven. I feel that I have met with a severe loss. Few physicians excelled him."

1844.

July.

"Friends are kind, and Providence smiles on us. We cannot speak of revivals of religion, for it is a time of dearth and coldness. But our congregation increases, and meetings are interesting. It is a time of worldly prosperity among us, and I trust the Lord has blessings rich and full in store for us."

The following introduction was followed by a long and minute account of the meeting of the A. B. C. F. M.:—

"*Worcester, Sept.* 12, 1844.

MY DEAR PARENTS,—We are enjoying the 'feast of tabernacles' this week. I wish you could look in upon us and see what a mass of people are collected together."

Oct.

"We rode over to Medway last week, to see Dr. Ide, who has been very unwell for four months, and unable to preach. We found him improving. We called also on Mrs. Torrey, and proffered our sympathy, which was very acceptable, for she is much afflicted. Her husband's trial soon comes on, at Baltimore, and she is going on to attend it. The *prospect* for him is six years confinement in the penitentiary, for no other crime than helping men to obtain what *belongs* to all, *freedom*."

1845.

To her parents.—Feb. 4th.

* * * "I went into the great anti-annexation meeting last week. Seats were reserved for ladies, and as I had never seen Faneuil Hall, I accepted Mr. W.'s invitation to go, and hear, and see. It was a great meeting, as you have doubtless seen by the papers.

I sat for a Daguerreotype likeness, and have a very good one. I should like you to see it. It is pronounced one of the best, and I see the likeness myself."

To her sister E.—April 20th.

"I must do *something soon* to recruit my health, or it will be useless to attempt any thing. My cough and general debility are my only difficulties."

To the same sister.—May 3d.

"I am greatly obliged to you for your kind offer to take tot home and take care of him. I appreciated the kindness, I assure you, and ought to have told you so ere this; but have only done it through the letters to father and mother."

"*New York City, May* 12, 1845.

MY DEAR SISTER,—'Is it well with the child?' is the first question which naturally suggests itself to the anxious absent mother, as she thinks of her darling boy, from whom she has torn herself. Would I could hear you reply, 'It is well.' Dear little lamb, how I long to see him. Does he remember and talk of papa and mamma? Don't let him forget us. You cannot tell how I felt when I left my little Calvin. My heart was full. I can never repay you for being a mother to my child. I hope to be able to confer some favor on you, should my life be spared to do any thing for any body. Nothing but a sense of duty to myself would have made me consent to be separated from my child. May the Lord bless and keep him, and give you strength equal to your task. I hope your own dear children are all well, and that they and Calvin play prettily together. Kiss them *all* for me. Tell Calvin mamma thinks of him, and prays for him a great deal, and wants to see him and kiss him.

Pardon my weakness in thus dwelling on this subject. You will, I trust, for you are a *mother*."

Extract from a letter of Mr. Webster.

"*Washington, D. C., May* 20, 1845.

DEAR PARENTS,—We were sadly disappointed in not finding Dr. Meigs, and again in finding Dr. Lindsley so sick. I hoped to be able to consult them both with relation to Rebecca.

Rebecca's cough continuing hard and her throat considerably sore, after our arrival here, I thought it best to seek advice, and we called Dr. Johnson, who is connected with the College."

Her view of the influence of slavery on society at Washington.

Her feelings in view of the state of society there are seen in the following statement, penned for her by her husband at this date, in a letter to a friend:—

"We are in the region of slavery. Its blight is on all this region. It is perfectly evident to an observing northerner, that the very ground about here is cursed for its sake. The land is miserably cultivated, and produces but little. Almost under the eaves of the capital it is lying waste and barren,—a shame and disgrace to our nation. But this is nothing in comparison with its influence upon the minds and hearts of its unhappy victims. I have just conversed with a slave who sighs for freedom. She speaks of a boy who was once her own, but is not now, because he has been sold to a cruel master in this city. O will you not pray for the poor slave?"

"*July 7th.*

The bad weather affected me very sensibly last week. I have coughed more. In fact, though my cough occasionally gets better, there is nothing *permanent* about it. It is no better than it was before I went away, and I begin to be discouraged in expecting it ever will be. What *kind* of a cough do *you* think it is? I am sure I cannot *tell* nor *guess*,—only it is '*right bad*,' and I usually feel '*right poorly*.'

To her sister.—July 30th.

"I was surprised to hear of the death of our old friend, Mrs. King. I did not know but she was as well as usual. I shall ever cherish her memory with pleasure. Don't you remember her interest in our salvation when we walked willingly the path which led to the destruction of souls?

Remembrance of fidelity to her soul in childhood and youth.

She was one of the first to warn us of our danger, and encourage us to believe in Jesus. She took us by the hand, and counselled us, and with her we often walked to the house of God in company. In her room I attended the first prayer-meeting I ever did attend, and in that same room offered my first audible prayer. She always manifested an interest in our spiritual welfare. And can we but revere her name and her memory? Don't you think in the day of judgment 'many will rise up and call her blessed?"

"*Sept.* 19*th.*

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—Yesterday we were called to mingle our sympathies with Rev. Mr. Wood, of Upton. His wife died on Tuesday, after a long sickness of six years,—most of which time she has been helpless and demented. The funeral services were very solemn. Mr. Webster prayed at the open grave; the choir sung a *farewell* dirge to the departed; after which Mr. Wood stepped near the grave and bending over it said, '*I too must say farewell*,' and left weeping."

"*Providence, Oct.* 28*th.*

MY DEAR HUSBAND,—Two o'clock yesterday found us safely landed at my father's door. We came quite crowded with passengers and baggage. I lost my *feet* when I got into the stage, and did not find them again till I came to Pawtucket, when much to my satisfaction they presented themselves. We lengthened our ride several miles to accommodate passengers.

I trust that our dear little Calvin is reconciled to 'mamma's going away to get well.'"

Unexpected return of disorder.—Kindness of friends at Providence.

"*Nov. 4th.*

Dr. F. has heard me cough several times, and feels sure it is a bronchial cough. He says the symptoms I have attend the bronchitis. What do you think the *next* doctor will think my complaint is? I wish Dr. F. to try and see if he can help me. I will give him a fair trial. I will not go home this week I think, but will give you seasonable notice."

"*Dec. 7th.*

I trust I am not violating this sacred hour in writing you this line. You are now doubtless engaged in preaching the word of God. I have prayed and do still pray God to help you and bless you, and to make it a good day to you, and to the people of your charge. I suppose it must be some weeks before I go home. Dr. F. says I cannot go down stairs in a *week* without *great risk*, and he wants me to get well over this, and not suffer for months on account of it."

"*Dec. 29th.*

Let me, dear parents, express to you, and through you, to my brothers and sisters, my most grateful and heartfelt acknowledgments for all your kindnesses to me while with you, during a long visit, and especially for the additional care and attention demanded by sickness, which confined me to my chamber. I think I appreciated it *then*, and do *now*. I know *compensation* is out of my power; but I pray *God* to reward you a *thousand fold* in this life, and *ten thousand fold* in that which is to come. He is the best paymaster."

Delicacy of her first suggestion that she expects soon to die.

CHAPTER XIX.

LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH.

THE following note was one of her first decided intimations of her expectation of soon leaving earth :—

"DEAREST FATHER,—'Gurney on the West Indies,' is a book Mrs. Jenkins gave me some years ago. I wish you to have something to *keep* in particular remembrance of me—something I have used and read. I therefore offer you this book as being one that I think will interest you. I hope you will be interested in reading it.

Your affectionate daughter,

REBECCA G. WEBSTER.

Feb. 1846."

The following served still more to prepare her father's family for her departure :—

"*Hopkinton, March* 5, 1846.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—God has thought it best to lay me on a sick-bed, and very likely it will prove my dying bed. I often think of you, and wish I had the assurance I should meet you in heaven. Now I am very feeble and weak, but I thought perhaps I might say a word, which would be carried home to your heart by the Holy Spirit, and be the means of leading you to Jesus. You have lived many years in sin, and unless you repent and give your heart to Christ, you and I cannot live together in heaven. It is most likely I shall not live a great many

Her boy's "little prattle sweet"—now that she must leave *him*.

weeks, although I know God is able even to make me well. Do, my dear brother, prepare to die while you are well and have your reason. A sick bed is *no place* to *prepare* to die. Remember it! I hope you will come and see me. I wish you had come with Anna.

Good bye, my dear brother. The Lord bring you to repentance, is the prayer of your affectionate sister,

REBECCA G. WEBSTER."

Soon after it was written, she saw her sister E. at her house, and made "parting arrangements respecting her domestic affairs."

The following are from her last letter to her sister E., dated May 2, 1846:—

* * * "How freely we related our Christian feelings to each other, and then we thought we were enjoying our last earthly interview." She referred to the recent visit of her sister who had aided in those "final arrangements." "Sometimes I fear that was a *stoical* resignation." "Wife, mother, daughter, sister, are tender, fond names. After surrendering all these, with faith as I supposed—my little boy *would want to tell me something*, and his little prattle sounding sweetly on my ear, would, in spite of all my effort, produce a gush of tears. It is *sweet* to hear him, and never *so* sweet as since I realized I must give him up, and he must be trained by other hands and mind than hers who bore him. I trust the Lord will provide for his proper training and government."

In her journal she wrote:—

"June 2d. Christ has appeared precious and near, and I almost see him extending his hand and calling '*Child*

come hither,' and I felt ready to say, 'For me to live is Christ, to die is gain.'

Thursday, June 4th. Have had a sweet and precious season this afternoon at six o'clock. Have been permitted to receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper in my sick room. I have long desired it, having not enjoyed such a privilege for a year, but hardly felt to dare ask it, feeling so unworthy. To-day my beloved parents are here, and sister Elizabeth, to enjoy it with me. Our deacons and their wives were present, with a few other friends. Rev. Dr. Ide, of Medway, came and administered the ordinance. It was a peculiarly solemn occasion. All seemed to enjoy it. Christ seemed to manifest himself to me, and I regard it as one of the bright spots in my pilgrimage."

She wrote to her aunt Bartlett, who is mentioned on pages 85, 107, etc.:—

"Being near the end of my earthly journey, I offer you a simple token of remembrance. * * All is peace and quietness within. I am ready to be offered. * * I find it sweet to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his. May we meet in heaven. Love to uncle and cousin and yourself. With a trembling hand I write. Live near the cross and you will wear a bright crown. Farewell, my dear aunt.

Your affectionate neice, R. G. WEBSTER.

"*Hopkinton, June* 17, 1846."

"Sabbath, July 12th. Here I am still an inhabitant of earth! My thirty-second birth-day has come upon me. How little did I think, six months ago, I should still be here. I expected to have reached my heavenly home long ere this. But I still linger. God is not yet done with me

"Death has lost its terrors to me."

here. His time is the best time, and I will try and wait patiently till my change cometh. Yet I have been longing for weeks to go and 'see Jesus, and dwell with him above, and from that flowing fountain drink everlasting love.' Heaven seems so desirable, and to be free from *sin* and sickness, pain and distress, that I long to be freed from this body of sin and death. To put off this mortal and this corruptible body, and to be clothed with incorruption and immortality, is an object to be longed for. Death has lost its terrors to me, and I only wait my Master's bidding. Jesus appears lovely, yea, 'the chief among ten thousand.' 'How sweet the name of *Jesus* sounds.'

'By *Him* my prayers acceptance gain,
Although by sin defiled;
Satan accuses me in vain,
For I am owned a *child*.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought,
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.'

I have had a very sick week. I have failed rapidly of late. I asked Dr. Pond, on Friday, if he did not 'think I was nearly through with this world?' 'Yes,' said he, 'I think you are; you *may* live some little time yet, but from appearances, you have nearly got through your work; you may die suddenly—we cannot tell.' I told him I was glad to hear that I was probably near home, for I did not dread death at all.

This is a delightful Sabbath! If it would please God to take me to himself to-day, I would say *Amen*. I hope God will give me grace and patience to wait his appointed time. My dear mother has been with me, and taken care of me the last six weeks. I cannot be sufficiently grateful for this blessing. Dear father is here to-day."

Gift of her journals to her husband.—Last effort of her pen.

It was the last entry in her journal. "She sank back exhausted. It was laid aside with a smiling glance." She expected "to find enjoyment in adding more by and by." But it was now for others to record her "progress towards home." Often during her sickness had these records recalled the past, and provided her with amusement. But she subsequently asked her husband to "*burn* the volumes of her journal." "They can be of no use to any one but me, and I shall not read in them again, I am too weak." He asked her "to give them to him, as they might do *him* good." She doubted "whether that were possible; they were only scratched down for" her "own use, and never could interest any body else;" but *she* had "done with them, and if they could do" him "any good," he might "have them." Not the most distant idea of a memoir of Mrs. Webster had then occurred to *any one;* but when this compilation was requested from several sources, it appeared that Providence had in this way provided some of the most valuable materials for its preparation.

The last effort of her pen contained the following:—

"*Hopkinton, Aug.* 1, 1846.
Sabbath evening, 6 *o'clock.*

DEAREST AND BEST OF PARENTS,—How pleasant to address you *once more*. Maria has bolstered me in bed, and I am going to scratch a line to you. * * I long to see you again. It seems a very long time since you left. * * * Miss B. is very kind and attentive, and I am perfectly satisfied with all she does; but you know no one takes, or I should rather say *fills* a *mother's* place. When you are *able, quite so*, I shall prefer being under your care to any one's, but not *till* then. By no means come till you are well. * * My head begins to whirl, and eyes forbid any more. The Lord is still with me, supporting me. He is

precious and true. Love in abundance to you both, and to all my beloved brothers and sisters, and kisses to the children. Mother Webster desires love to you and all.

Ever your affectionate daughter, REBECCA."

It will be noticed that she began with allusion to her situation in the terms "*once* more." But though aware of its being her last letter to her parents, she forbears other allusion to the fact. It was her wish "still strong in death," to avoid needless pain in herself and in others. As in this letter, so in all the scenes of her sick-room, many of her efforts at conversation seemed to have this object only in view. An affectionate, youthful sister of the church was at one period of her sickness assiduously attending to her wants from day to day, as an expression of her kind regard, but meanwhile under great depression of spirits. The approaching departure of her pastor's companion seemed to unnerve her for a season, even while lingering over the couch of suffering. This greatly pained Mrs. Webster. Seizing a favorable opportunity, she employed her wit in innocent raillery, until the gloom of her situation was forgotten by all, in the keenness of her satire. All were fully aware of her design. None were shocked. Such relief she alone *could* give. It was felt to be proper. There was thus an evident intention on her part to *live out* to the last, and *exhibit* to others to the last the *cheerfulness of piety*. She employed her *mind at times in anticipating* the supply of her family's *wants*, as to apparel, etc., when she should cease to be with them.

Views taken at different points of observation give greatest accuracy to our perceptions. To afford the reader an opportunity to do this, in regard to a Christian's life, has been one object in the preceding pages. That the same

may be done the more vividly, in the retrospect of her married life, as well as to give an accurate view of the parting scene, the words of her surviving companion will, with his reluctant consent, now be introduced. They were not penned for publication, but merely to furnish facts for the compiler. But they speak, as the compiler could not do :—

"BROTHER STONE,—In compliance with your request, I have penned the following reminiscences of Rebecca's last days, from which you can select such facts as you deem necessary.

My dear wife was in feeble health when we were married. But settled among an affectionate people,—with the exception of occasional ill turns and one or two rather severe fits of sickness, for five years our happiness was uninterrupted. A merciful Providence smiled upon us in a remarkable manner. Friends frequently remarked to us, that we were enjoying altogether too much to endure long, and that we must expect severe trials. We endeavored to realize it; for the thought would sometimes come over us in almost an overwhelming manner, and form the subject of conversation. But she would suggest at such times 'that God had, at least for the time being, conferred *blessings*, that "sufficient unto the day is the *evil* thereof," and that the promise of God was sure that his grace should be sufficient in the day of evil for those who truly put their trust in Him.' That is, while she intended, by no means, to be blind to the trials that would sooner or later come upon us; but, on the other hand, to permit the anticipation of them to exert their chastening and appropriate influence; still she labored that they should not mar our present happiness, and thus, in any measure, impair our

Serious forebodings.—"Dying grace expected to die by."

usefulness. And nothing did, during the first five years of our settled life, essentially interrupt our united labors to do good in the field which God had assigned us. In the spring of 1843, the Lord added to our cup of happiness, which before seemed full, the gift of a son. Up to this time, nothing had occurred in my dear wife's health, to occasion any serious apprehensions. With care, our physicians told us, she might enjoy comfortable health for many years. In a few months, however, she was visited, for the first time in her life, with a cough. But for a year it was comparatively slight, and did not much alarm us till early in 1845. She, however, had expressed her conviction that it proceeded from the immediate cause that was to terminate her earthly pilgrimage. And in the spring of 1845, some of her friends became persuaded that her convictions were but too well founded. We resorted to the various expedients of journeying, change of scene and climate, and sought medical advice in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington. But all to no purpose. Her cough increased, and wore upon her constitution. Still her spirits were not essentially affected. But a few months before she had said to a mutual friend, 'I am just as happy as I can be.' And now, as she became more unwell, and she could not help having some serious forebodings, in conversation with the same friend, she said, 'she had some misgivings about the process of *dying*. I am not so much afraid to *be dead*,—but I am not disposed to trouble myself about it; I think I shall have dying grace to die by.' In the autumn of 1845 she made a visit to her parents and friends in Providence, R. I. While there she was attacked with a severe sickness, which reduced her very much. Near the close of December, she recovered so far as to be able to reach home. In the beginning of

1846, it became apparent that all means for restoration, or even protracted life, must prove unavailing. She felt that disease was making rapid strides, and for almost the first time, her spirits sunk within her. She felt that she must leave us. The thought was overwhelming. And what was more distressing, she felt that she had betrayed her Saviour. Her mind was shrouded in darkness; her Saviour was afar off; she mourned and wept in view of her unfaithfulness. She was in this state of mind several weeks. She then felt that she should not continue through the month of April. But God had not brought death quite so near as she apprehended. She did continue; her symptoms improved a little, or she became a little more comfortable; and her spirits revived. Her hope returned; her religious enjoyment increased. And although no ray of hope for restoration to health or protracted life dawned upon her mind, yet she recovered her view of the preciousness of her Saviour. She was happy. She had passed through the struggle of resigning her husband, her darling boy, her parents, brothers and sisters, and all her friends into the hands of her Saviour, or rather of settling the question in her own mind of leaving them, and going herself to be with Christ. And she conversed with the friends who called to see her, about her anticipated departure with great calmness. She even continued to exercise and express the same care and anxiety that she ever did about her domestic arrangements. That is, *while* she continued *here*, the feeling manifested was, that she had *duties to do*, and that the position, in which she would choose to have her *Saviour find her* at his coming, was in the *discharge of her duty*. In May, 1846, she could, with assistance, pass from one room to another, and a few times she rode out. Her friends from abroad came to take their

Cheered by visits of Dr. Tenney, Rev. Mr. Stewart, and others.

final leave of her. She enjoyed their society much, and, as she was always wont, made their visit happy to themselves. Though she felt it was the last, she carefully avoided to cast over it the gloom of the grave. She rather reflected, even then, the light and cheerfulness of a spirit at rest in the enjoyment of inward peace, and the expectation of better things yet to come. At times, after this, she expressed her doubts and fears. Her life was continued beyond her expectations. She could not help feeling something like disappointment, and she thought she was less prepared to meet her Saviour than she was a few weeks previous when she viewed her end immediately approaching. But she again became more contented to live, to linger and suffer still more if the Lord saw fit. She loved to see the devoted friends of Christ, and especially his ministering servants. She felt specially benefitted by visits from Rev. Dr. Tenney, of Northampton, agent of the Mass. Colonization Society, who had passed through many trials, and who had learned by experience that *all* things, and that afflictions and blessings do really work *together*, *in concert*, for the good of those who love Christ, and from Rev. Dr. Ide, of Medway, and Rev. Mr. Stewart, of Greenville, Illinois, as well as many younger brethren in our neighborhood. And it was a very great comfort to her, that her beloved parents could be with her a great portion of the time during the last six months of her life. She had been deprived of the privilege of joining the people of God in the sacrament of the Lord's supper for the whole year past. We accordingly made arrangements, at her request, to have the solemn ordinance administered at our own house for her special gratification. And it was done the 4th of June, 1846, by Dr. Ide, of Medway, who kindly came over, at our request, for the express purpose.

"Her distress dreadful and indescribable."—Habits of prayer.

Our parents were all present and several of our neighbors. It was a solemn and deeply interesting season to our family circle, and her spiritual strength was greatly renewed. It was the way in which she had always specially delighted to commemorate the love of Christ.

After this time, and during the months of July and August, the weather was very oppressively warm the greater portion of the time, and her respiration became more difficult. At regular periods, each day, she would have a season which lasted from a half an hour to one hour or more, when it seemed as though she could not long survive. It seemed to be with difficulty, that by throwing wide open all the doors and windows, and the use of fans, we could enable her to breathe at all. And though now, as up to this time, she was remarkably free from acute pain, her *distress* at these seasons became dreadful and indescribable. From June till her death, she became more and more emaciated, till little flesh remained, and her sufferings became more and more intense. Still a murmuring word never escaped her lips; and no regrets, in view of her end, which was inevitably near, were ever expressed by her.

It was a great trial to her to be obliged to abandon the practice of uniting and leading in prayer herself with her husband, which had been her custom from the commencement of her married life, immediately before retiring to rest. It was a custom of her own suggestion. She continued it a long time after she was so weak that she could not properly kneel by her chair. And I can never forget one evening, a few weeks before her death, when she was so weak that she could scarcely raise her head from her pillow. Before lying down myself for the night, and having committed our souls to the care of our covenant-keeping

Last prayer with her husband, "a prayer once for all."

God, she embraced the opportunity once more herself, as she lay upon her bed, of giving utterance to her feelings in solemn prayer,—and *such* a prayer, for fervor, for directness, for simplicity, for pathos, I never heard before, and never expect to hear again; her husband, her little boy, her parents and brothers and sisters and friends, the people among whom we have lived so happily, and the cause of Christ, were the objects of her desire, came up in rapid succession to her memory, and formed the burden of that prayer; and there was a remarkable deliberateness and distinctness, and solemnity of tone in her expression, that rings in my ear at the present moment. It seemed as though she felt that it was a *prayer once for all*, the last opportunity she was to have on earth to plead the cause of the objects of her affection before her Maker.

On Saturday, the 12th of September, I have it recorded, 'My dear Rebecca more feeble. In the evening all my hopes sank within me; for the first time, I felt that a few days at farthest, must bring about that awful separation that we have so long anticipated and talked about.' The Sabbath morning arrived. It was very pleasant. She asked her physician if he thought she could live through the day. He thought she could not. She then said, 'Would you not like to go to heaven this pleasant day?' I went to meeting in the morning, but tarried only to baptize a child, and returned to spend the last Sabbath she could spend on earth with my dear wife. My people knew well the reason of my absence, and one of my church afterward remarked to me that my absence that day, or my retiring from the house of God that morning, seemed to produce a greater effect than any sermon I had preached. Deacon Morse called to see her after tea, and she remarked that she was glad to see him, and said, 'This is

Her spirit composed.—Cheering sentiments.—Reference to the *witness of* "*her life.*"

the last Sabbath, deacon, that I am to spend on earth; only think, before another Sabbath I hope to be in heaven.' It afforded her great comfort to see her father.

Monday, the 14th, came, and, as I recorded at the time, it was a dreadful day to us all. Her sufferings were much more severe. We all remained around her bedside during the whole day, expecting to see her any moment breathe her last. Her respiration was exceedingly difficult; a cold sweat stood in drops upon her face, and the vital fluid fluttered in her veins. She was so exhausted that she lay almost motionless. But amid her intense suffering, her spirit was composed. Frequently she gave utterance to the most heart-cheering sentiments. She felt that she was in the arms of Jesus. At this time, to show how remarkably the cheerful predominated in her nature, an affecting incident occurred. During the forenoon of this day, as we all sat watching her pulse with intense anxiety, and completely shrouded in gloom, our dear little boy, three and a half years old, came into the room with his little wagon-load, in imitation of the pedlars, and asked us if we wanted to buy any thing? I remarked gently to him, 'No, dear, your mamma we fear is dying, we do not feel like trading now.' His mother immediately raised her feeble voice and said, 'Yes, dear, mamma *will* buy *something; what* do *you ask?*' Soon after, seeming to summon up all her remaining strength, she thus addressed us, expecting herself soon to launch away, 'I have no messages to leave,—no exhortations to give,—nothing like a sermon to preach; if my *life* has not recommended my religion to you, all that I can say now would seem only to be acting the part of a hypocrite. You are professors of religion; you know your duty; all I would say is, *live* for *Christ.*' In a little while she uttered, in a distinct and emphatic tone, this ejacula-

Unable to repress thankfulness for her early conversion.

tory prayer, evidently thinking of every one present in our relative order, 'Oh Lord, be better than *wife*, better than *mother*, better than *daughter*, better than *sister*, better than *friend*,'—and then added, '*I am done*.' But still, contrary to all our expectations, she continued to linger and suffer during the afternoon. The evening came. She wished us to sing, and a few friends joined in singing,—

'Rock of ages, cleft for me.'

And she repeated herself, in clear tones,—

'In my hands no price I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling.'

At another time, she repeated the following:—

'Why was I made to hear thy voice,
And enter while there's room—
When thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come.'

A long and dreadful night of suffering and anguish passed away. It was the first time that I had myself surrendered the care of her to a watcher from out my house. I wrote as follows:—

'Tuesday, the 15th came, and my dear wife still with us, but suffering most intensely; no respite,—yet her reason is remarkably and mercifully preserved, and she realizes her situation perfectly.' Though the day previous, she thought she had nothing to say, she was now unable to repress her rising emotions. Repeatedly she expressed her thankfulness that her attention had been called to the subject of religion in early life, and, as she lay gasping for breath, she would say, 'A dying bed is no place to prepare for death.' But her distress was so great, she could say but little during the day. Every one who came in,

supposed, from her appearance, he had come just in season to see her breathe her last. She constantly uttered a most pitiful moan, interspersed, every now and then, with the ejaculatory expression, '*Well—well*,' as if she would signify her entire resignation to the will of her Lord. In the afternoon, Mrs. Greene arrived from Providence. They were dearly attached, and the meeting was deeply affecting. She seemed to be revived for the time being. As soon as the first salutation was over, she said, 'The Lord is always good; I have another token of his goodness in permitting me once more to see my dear sister Elizabeth.'

Amid all her sufferings, she did not forget the objects of benevolence that had interested her heart in other days. Her mother being deaf, it was with difficulty she could converse with her. The day before,—all the time, however, in a dying state,—she motioned to her mother to get her hearing trumpet. Placing its bowl to her mouth, and bending over her beloved daughter, she heard, 'Mother, I want you to remember the slave, if for no other reason, remember *the slave* for my sake; I am thankful the Lord ever put it into my heart to care for *the slave;* if I was to live my life over again, I would do a *great deal more* for the poor slave.'

Wednesday, the 16th, my dear wife was doomed to pass another day of anguish, and her friends were scarcely less affected to witness her sufferings. Nevertheless, I heard the following, as if a part of a prayer, fall from her lips:—

> 'Oh what are all my sufferings here,
> If thou but count me meet!'

About seven o'clock, she wished her position changed, and endeavoring to raise her up a little in bed, she was extremely exhausted, and for a few moments we supposed

she was breathing her last. But she revived again. During the forenoon she summoned up her remaining strength, to give a few words of exhortation to her friends who were sitting around her bed-side. She addressed us individually and by name, as follows:—'My dear father and mother, you have been to me the kindest of parents,—live to Christ,—oh, be more spiritual, that is what I want. Mother Webster, I thank you for all your kindness, the Lord reward you, and fit you for his presence. My dear child, Calvin, be a good boy, be good to your grandmother, never strike her,—be good to Maria,—obey your father, be a comfort to him,—love Christ. My dear sister Elizabeth, love that Saviour more and more, whom you have always exalted so much more than I have; love him still; never leave nor forsake him; keep near the cross,—say the same to your dear husband for me; tell him to live for Christ; kiss each of your dear children for me, and tell them to love the Saviour, and give him their hearts. Maria Thurston, I claim for my husband and his mother all that regard from you, to which their years and station entitle them, while you remain with them; take good care of that darling child; love your Saviour; be a devoted Christian. Dr. Scammell, I have appreciated all your kindness to my family; I hope you will be a successful physician, and do good not only to the bodies but the souls of your fellow-men.' In a similar manner she added a few words to some one else present. Oh how those solemn words fell upon our ears. They can never be forgotten. They went to our hearts. Then she begged that her earnest desires for the conversion of an absent brother and sister, might be expressed to them. 'Tell them,' said she, 'that I am willing to die, if my death may but be instrumental in leading them to Christ.' Apprehensive that we

Farewell counsel to her husband.—Her wish in regard to her little son.

should all be deeply affected as the crisis approached, she exhorted us not to let her see any tears. 'Spare them,' she said, 'till I am gone; they only aggravate my sufferings.'

Oh, that the Lord would cause those dying counsels of my dearest wife to produce their legitimate effect. Never, it seems to me, did I before so fully realize the full worth of my beloved companion.

After she had spoken to all the rest present, she said to me, 'Dearest husband, I do not know that I have any thing more to say to you than I have repeatedly said; be a faithful minister of Christ; win souls to Christ; it is not so essential that you make more visits among the people, as that you make them more *spiritual*.' When I inquired of her what her greatest desire was with reference to our dear little boy, she said. 'I want him to be a faithful minister of Jesus Christ.' May the Lord enable me to give heed to those dying admonitions.

Deacon Fitch came in after dinner and sat with us. He thought she could continue only a few moments longer. Again she wished us to sing,—

'Rock of ages, cleft for me.'

Such protracted suffering was seldom ever witnessed, and yet she spoke of the kindness of her Heavenly Father, and, to use her own language, she said, 'It continues to the very last.'

Thursday, the 17th, the doctor came in early before breakfast, and as he entered, dear wife said to him, 'Good morning, doctor,—

"I still linger, shivering on the brink,
And long to launch away."

And,—

"Tho' his hand be lifted up,
He still withholds the blow!" '

It was a great wonder to us all that she should have lived till this time. She said, 'If it were right, I would pray the Lord to remove me hence, but I am afraid I should sin in doing it.' The remark was only a striking exhibition of her habitual conscientiousness. She feared to sin against God. She would endure any amount of suffering rather than offend her Maker. To our questions, whether the Saviour continued precious, she invariably replied in the affirmative. She repeatedly said to her sister E., 'I think I am in Jesus' arms.'

To dwell now upon the subsequent scene is more than I can bear. I pray for grace to say, 'Not my will, but thine, O God, be done,' and 'The Lord gave; and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.'

Yours truly, J. C. WEBSTER.

"*Hopkinton, June* 28, 1847."

Her sister Elizabeth's pen supplies the remaining portion of the picture of her death-bed:—

"Not long before her death, she asked for singing. Some one handed *me* a book to sing. She answered for me, before I had a chance to refuse, saying, '*Elizabeth* can't sing *now*.' I said to her, 'Rebecca, you will soon hear sweeter music in heaven.' She answered, 'Yes, O yes, it will be delightful, and only think of it, I shall be able to sing *too, then*.'

She seemed to be a little revived, though restless. We had no idea that she would drop away so suddenly. Her husband had been constantly by her, having no rest whatever for several days and nights, and after a great deal of persuasion, we prevailed on him to leave her a little while, and try to get a few minutes of repose, while one of the

neighbors, with our dear father, and myself, sat with her. I repeated to her, occasionally, some precious promise, which seemed to comfort her, and once the verse,—

> 'O glorious hour, O blest abode,
> I shall be near, and like my God,
> Nor sin nor death, no more control,
> The sacred pleasures of my soul.'

She looked up, and with a sweet smile, said, 'Yes, glorious, glorious.' About two o'clock, she appeared less restless, and laid more quietly. A change passed over her countenance. With a strong voice, and much earnestness, she said, '*Pa*, I'm *dying*.' He immediately went up stairs, and called her husband, mother, and the family. I said to her, 'Are you *willing*, dear Rebecca, to go?' She faintly replied, smiling, 'Yes.' Her husband was by her in a moment. She could not speak. He ran and brought their little one, and held him down to her lips. He said, '*Do*, my dear, speak to *me*, *do kiss* our *dear boy*, *once* more.' Her lips slightly moved, but she could not kiss. She could not smile. After breathing a few times more, at three o'clock, on the morning of the 18th Sept., 1846, her spirit winged its flight to mansions of glory. After a few moments, we all knelt around her bed, and her husband offered prayer."

"*Hopkinton, Sept.* 18, 1846.

DEAR BROTHER STONE,—My dear wife slept in Jesus, at about three o'clock this morning. The funeral, with divine leave, will be on Monday next, 21st, at one o'clock, P. M. Come, if you can, and shed a tear with us.

Yours, in deep affliction,

J. C. WEBSTER."

Her own reference to her grave.

In accordance with her wishes, Rev. Dr. Ide had been requested, before her decease, to preach at her funeral. Sudden sickness prevented him from being present on that occasion. The attachment of the principal mourner for the college classmate and intimate friend to whom the above note was addressed, urged him to attempt, at a few hours' notice, preparation for a funeral discourse,—a fact which explains the selection of his pen to compile these pages. A large collection, embracing many ministers from different states, testified their regard for her memory on the occasion.

Respecting her *grave*, she had herself written at her father's:—

"Often, when in the grave-yard at Providence, have I marked the spot where this poor, frail body of mine would lie; but I did not do so on this visit.—(It was in 1841.) I thought of it, it is true, but I thought, too, it was hardly probable that my bones would ever lie in Providence, seeing I no longer find my home here. But what matter is it, where our ashes lie? If my soul is washed in the blood of Jesus, and I fitted for a home in heaven, it is of no consequence about the body which so soon decays and crumbles to earth."

In the north-western corner of the new cemetery at Hopkinton, shaded by a single stately tree, her remains await the resurrection. The generous sympathy of ladies in her husband's parish, has testified their respect for the deceased, by erecting over them a beautiful monument. May long years be spared for surviving affection to exhibit to the world the holy influences which hover around that spot.

Her own voice of consolation.—A thought of her present joy.

To the mourning father and mother, sisters and brothers, the compiler would here present the words which they first read in their "Rebecca's" own hand-writing, after the death of the eldest son of their family. They now come as from her grave, to say again,—

"View your trial as sent by our Heavenly Father, to *purify* and *sanctify* your souls, and let it have its legitimate effect. You can make this affliction profitable, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, if you desire it, and if you are *actively* engaged in *Christian duty*, and strive to walk near the Saviour, and glorify him."

The following letter to her sister, suggests, at its close, a thought of her present joys,-which many mourners will read with satisfaction:—

"*June* 1, 1847.

MY BELOVED CHRISTIAN SISTER,—I send, with this, letters addressed to me by the dear one whom the Lord has taken to himself, as I have been informed that the propriety of publishing a Memoir had been discussed, and it was desired that friends would send such letters as they may have preserved. I valued her correspondence very highly, and carefully kept every thing received from her. These may arrive too late; if so, will you be kind enough to return them. Few were so generally loved as she, and much as you valued her as a sister, it would seem that her friends generally esteemed her as highly. I love to call her to mind, and greatly love to imagine her crowned and adorned 'by Him whom she adored.' May we be prepared to meet her."

"The thrill of parting."

Rev. T. T. Waterman, the author of the following lines, was one of Mrs. Webster's 'earliest Christian advisers, and one whose counsels and preaching' she 'always remembered as an important aid to her spiritual advancement.' His name has often occurred in the progress of this memoir. Her journal records that he said to her on Jan 9, 1837,—"Oh! Rebecca, be faithful, glorify God; and may you be a glorified spirit in heaven." She *was in heaven*, when he wrote, in 1847, just *ten years after*,—

"THE THRILL OF PARTING."

"Repress! No, I would not, that thrill of the soul
Which saddens the moment of parting with friend;
That thrill, 'tis the strength of affections which roll
Down the current of time, 'till partings shall end.

That thrill—let it come, in the might of its power,
It bids us look upward and onward for peace;
It hails the glad promise and welcomes the hour,
When the sorrows of parting forever shall cease.

O, then, when in heaven, what emotions will rise,
As hearts, which are holy, in fellowship rest;
Nor distance, nor absence, nor tears reach the skies,
Nor farewell is heard in the home of the blest.

Then cease thy repining, and chase away gloom,
By faith 'look aloft,' where attachments abide;
Our Jesus has triumphed o'er sin and the tomb,
And by parting, we meet to be one at his side."

INDEX.

PREFACE.

REASONS FOR THIS COMPILATION, ... p. 5

INTRODUCTION.

REV. JOHN RUSSELL, WHO DIED IN 1680,—AND REV. THOMAS GAIR, WHO DIED IN 1790, ... p. 7
Descendants of John Russell.—Childhood of Rev. Thomas Gair.—General mourning in Boston for Mr. Gair.—Surviving widow's trust in God.—Influence of ancestry on her character..

CHAPTER I.

MRS. WEBSTER'S CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL DAYS, p. 13
Resolution and propriety.—"Infant buried at sea."—In tears while asleep.—Liberal disposal of needles.—Music-box in singing-school.—Heedlessness.—Drollery.—Love of missionary "heroism."—Bible read through at recess—Cheerfulness.—Popularity.—Studies.—"Her original song."—Chastisement.—Composition.

CHAPTER II.

CONVERSION, AND COMMENCEMENT OF RELIGIOUS LIFE, ... p. 20
Cotillon parties.—Fondness for whist and cards.—Propounded to join the church.—Address to school-mates.—Fear of persecution.—Little distress of mind.—"Rude and ungovernable disposition."—Crowd at baptizing at Eddy's Point.—First religious impressions.—Her mother's fears.—Desertion of vain amusements.—Birth-day at sixteen.—Result of omitting usual devotions.—Views of "prayer as a means of grace."

CHAPTER III.

COMMENCEMENT OF CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY, . . . p. 29
Interest in Home Missions.—Long walk to a prayer-meeting—"Wrongfully accused."—Prayer, as an act of charity.—Continued attractiveness of society.—Pilgrim at Constantinople—Wish to be "no half-way Christian."—Letter to an impenitent friend.—Attendance at Catholic church.—Letter concealed in her brother's chest on his going to sea.—Appeal to repent urged by "a sister's love," and "Last request."—Stormy Sabbath and secret worship. Christian activity in the closet.

CHAPTER IV.

SKETCH OF MRS. WEBSTER AS A SABBATH-SCHOOL TEACHER, ... p. 38

Tedious sameness of biography avoided.—Appearance in her class to a stranger.—Power over minds.—Letter to a Sabbath-school pupil.—A teacher's prayer for her class.—No peace without Christ.—Danger of being ashamed of Jesus.—World's vanities tried.—"For what would you sell your soul?"—Letter to one newly turned to the Lord.—Allusion to her own levity.—Prayer and enjoyment.—"Consciousness of incapability."—Mr. Crawford's address to her class.—Outline plan of Sabbath-school lesson.—Mode of interesting pupils.—Report to superintendent.—Successive classes. Salvation her object.—Love of souls source of power.

CHAPTER V.

HER PREPARATION FOR A PROTRACTED MEETING.—INTEREST IN IT.—ITS INFLUENCE, ... p. 50

Loss of interest in public worship.—Despondency.—Visits Boston.—Seventeenth birth-day.—Efforts to appear cheerful.—Commencement of expected meeting.—Preachers.—"Awful separation."—She receives a new impulse in religion.—Pledge to prayer.—Rev. Mr. Finney leaves Providence.—Special meetings left her more humble.

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. WEBSTER AS A TRACT DISTRIBUTER, . . . p. 57

Seeks God's aid.—Desires Christians to pray for her success.—Map in her closet to aid her prayers.—Strength from prayer.—Conversion of an aged lady.—"Conditions" of giving tracts.—Her "reward" as a distributer.—Opposition from a Minister.—Tracts rejected as containing nothing new.—Intemperance.—District prayer-meetings.—Conversation with an inquirer. A rude repulse.—Death of a gay and thoughtless young lady.—Influence of pastor's prayers.—Obliged to close distribution.

CHAPTER VII.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER EXHIBITED IN LETTERS WRITTEN AT NINETEEN, ... p. 67

Watering seed already sown.—Dream of a ball.—A patient sufferer.—Obligations of youth to honor their parents.—Attachment to the Sabbath.—A funeral sermon.—Journey to Canada relinquished.—Gratification afforded by letters from friends.—Spiritual conversation at a social party.—"Levity" and "slander."—Tears of penitence refreshing.—Ravages of cholera, an incentive to duty.—"Very domestic."—Protracted meeting in Rev. Mr. Waterman's society.—"A sister's prayers and tears cannot save the soul."—Family meeting at the judgment.—Young ladies' prayer-meeting on Sabbath noon.—Restored health, as a means of doing good.—Memoirs should show what *was*, not what might have been.

CHAPTER VIII.

VISIT TO CANADA IN 1834, ... p. 85

Affecting scene on leaving Sabbath-school for a season.—Tracts introduced to notice of others, in a steamboat, by reading them.—"Compelled to violate the Sabbath by decision of others."—Prays in Canada for Providence.—Letter of advice.—Love for growth in grace.—Gratitude for her journey.—Asks forgiveness for selfishness, &c.—Views of Canadian society.—Possibility of devout feelings in travelling.—Sail from Kingston to Cape Vincent.—A converted infidel in the pulpit.—Sabbath desecrated by French population.—Remembrance of sermons heard at home.—Cholera in Canada.—A "deacon's meeting."—Sin the cause of the epidemic in Providence.—Satisfaction in receiving letters while journeying.—Religious privileges of the Canadians.—Journey home.—Spends Sabbath alone, at New York, rather than return on that day.—Views respecting closing city churches in August.—Influence left behind her on a dying friend.—Her discussion with a Romanist.—Subsequent allusion to her journey.

CHAPTER IX.

VIEWS AND CONDUCT AT THE FORMATION OF HIGH-STREET CHURCH, ... p. 108

Censured for worshipping away from her own church.—Rev. James Wilson's history and preaching.—Mr. Wilson's religious tenets.—Witnesses baptism of one of her Sabbath-school class.—First thoughts of leaving Mr. Wilson's church.—Letter on the subject to her parents.—Balancing of arguments.—Conversation with her parents on the subject.—Painful indecision as to duty in the case.—Expression of views of Rev. Mr. Wilson's preaching and influence.—Appeal to close the year in view of judgment.—"Any thing but a party spirit in a church."—Reasons for new church.—Influence upon old church.—Her dismission.—Her difficulties as to infant baptism.—Number of letters of the year.—Anxiety to know her own influence.—Her sickness, and recovery.—No regret at new church relations.—Letter to a former pupil.—"A *whole* Christian."—"Look not back."—"A high standard of action."—Conversion of a pupil.—Sickness sent to sanctify.—A *Christian* visit.—The new church feeling its feebleness, and asking for prayer.—Her resemblance to Harlan Page, in view of a friend of both.—Continued interest in Mr. Wilson's church.—A "little church" needs efficient members.—Mind, and religious feelings, affected by health. "Conscience and the Bible her preachers."

CHAPTER X.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER EXHIBITED IN LETTERS WRITTEN IN 1835—36, ... p 137

Letters a picture "of common sense of life."—Benevolent effort to promote cheerfulness.—Her heart "a bad soil."—Ludicrous adventures on a journey.—Horseback exercise.—Two candles for a whole meeting-house.—"Bass music."—Pulpit curtain "down east."—"Minister, a farmer, town-treasurer, sexton, and pastor."—Tenderness of a sister's affection for a

sister.—Feelings at parting, at her sister's marriage.—Sympathy with her brother, sick at a "boarding-house."—Willing to "fade away."—Adding to her "treasure in heaven."—"An eldest child holds a responsible station."—"Rheumatism sticks closer than a brother."—Longs for house of God.—Letter of condolence on the death of a babe.—Joy at increase of High-street church.—Visiting the sick.—Ride to Hartford, Ct.—"Hydrophobia" there.—"A serenade."—Deems large parties wrong.—Loves to spend Sabbaths alone.—Her ideal of good preaching.—"Forget me any where but in the closet."—Attachment of Christians to visiting in parties mysterious.—Sermon of Professor P.—"Particular seat for writing home."—Gratitude for attentions at Amherst.—Improved health.—Remarks respecting herself accidentally heard.—Wish that Amherst might remember her, when dead.—Urges preparation for the "journey of death."

CHAPTER XI.

EFFORTS AS SECRETARY OF LADIES' SOCIETIES, p. 165

Origin of the Providence Female Bethel Society.—Meaning of "Bethel."—Sailors often heathen.—Christ's interest in Jewish sailors.—"Seamen not worldly-minded at sea."—Claims of the Society.—Duty of the City to its seamen.—Sailors often a barrier to the gospel.—"Men of the tribe of Zebulon Christ's life-guard."—Who is the sailor's keeper?—Number of sailors a plea for their instruction.—Need of a sailor's home at Providence.—Encouragement to secure a sailor's home.—A barque dedicated by religious services.—High-street Female Missionary Society founded in prayer.—Work of Christians on earth immense.—Missionary effort only commenced.—Who is willing to have no part in God's work?—Record of attendance at prayer-meeting.—Reasons for absence.—"God faithful—professors unfaithful."—Duty on commencing "a new era" with the new year.

CHAPTER XII.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE, ... p. 183

Morbid public taste respecting courtship, as a part of biography.—Severe criticism expected.—Reasons for introducing this chapter.—Letter to a newly married friend.—A wife's responsibilities.—Declines receiving "particular attentions."—"Thoughts of *engagement* in marriage."—Grateful for permission to leave this subject to God.—Twenty-first birth-day.—"Wish, if married, to be a *pastor's* wife."—"Cannot sacrifice principles."—Seeks advice.—Refers the friend whose proposals she declines, to Christ. First acquaintance with Rev. J. C. Webster.—First impressions respecting an invitation to go to Russia.—First letter to Mr. Webster.—Objections to going 4,500 miles.—Prayer for direction.—Decision.—"Confidence that God can fit her for any station."—Advised to "be respectful," and begin letters with "Rev. Mr. W.—Sir."—Regret at Mr. W.'s departure for Russia lost in view of duty.—"Ministers often injudicious in selecting a companion."—Relief, in commending her absent friend to God.—Urges Mr. W. to do good, while waiting for fair wind.—Wandering thoughts in prayer.—"Wish for a rail-road to Russia."—First letter to Mr. W. on his return from Europe.—A *good* prayer.—Urges "let your light shine."—"Dares not advise respecting Mr. W.'s remaining chaplain."—Views of

her uncle Gair, (one of the firm of Baring, Brothers, & Co.) of Liverpool. Painfulness of suspense.—Ventures *now* to *advise* Mr. W.—His delay in complying.—A new form of attack by Satan.—Frequency and sin of violated engagements.—Design of Satan.—Wish to be released from her pledge of affection.—Avowed reasons for this wish.—Purest friendship retained.—Whole matter left freely to her.—Advice of her parents.—Mr. W. had "done nothing" to cause the change.—"Cannot *write*."—Wishes a personal interview.—Return of her attachment.—"Say not Rebecca is fickle."—"Arch adversary" source of "terrible letter."—A playful sally.—Explanation of her course, in a letter to her brother.—"Agitating questions prevent unanimity in churches."—Meets a sailor who heard Mr. W. preach in Russia.—"Not feeling sin adds injury to insult in abusing God's love."—"God would not have Mr. W. settled in two parishes at once."—Suggestions as to duty while a candidate for settlement.—Affection "sees through a *glass*,—*very darkly*."—"Solemn to think of her influence over Mr. W."—S. S. pupils "wishing Mr. W. had never seen" their teacher. Description of her expected location.—One hundred letters written, and eighty-two received in 1833.—Wedding.—"Praying together."—Sabbath-school class' gift.—Letter on leaving parents.—Her gratitude for parental kindnesses.

CHAPTER XIII.

COMMENCEMENT OF MARRIED LIFE, . . . p. 227

Need of Heavenly wisdom in her new relation.—"Think of me only as happy."—Acquaintances formed pleasant.—"Tries to be sedate."—"Quaker faces."—"Dignity"—Prayer-meeting.—Husband's birth-day. Bible-class very interesting.—A wide field of labor.—"Undeserving of others' good opinion."—"Pleasantly situated."—Whole families introduced.—A melancholy death.—Pastoral visits.—A great sufferer.—Remembers *her* blessings.—"Finds much refinement and intelligence, and good common sense."—Painful to be dismissed from High-street Church in Providence.—Distance does not lessen attachment.—"Cares already begin to press."—"Tares among wheat."—"To-day—now."—Visits Almshouse.—"I want you to pray for *my soul*."—Boy who "never went to *meeting*, and never went to but one *ball*."—Rum and brandy at a funeral.—Tolling bell at sunset.—"Minister needed at home."—"Gift of a building spot."—Meets the children of the congregation.—Interest in former church connection.—Remembrance of her father's birth-day.—Tender affection for a S. S. pupil.—Separations.—"Tomorrow exists not."—"Religion is *everything* if *anything*"—"Ministers' wives almost need a regular course in theology."—Plan of journey.—"Opportunities to do good daily offering."—Goes to see H. Newell's birth-place.—Whitefield's Tomb.—Grave of her husband's father.—Her view of Newburyport.—Her reception at Hampton.—Attendance upon Boston Anniversaries.—Interest in account of revival at the Sandwich Islands.—Constitution of Missionary Society.—Political folly at town meetings.—Mite Society.—Fire at midnight.—A faithful dog their means of rescue.—"Shall I address you as a Christian or a sinner?"—Rejoicing at conversion of one of her S. S. pupils in Hopkinton.—Her heart bleeds for the enslaved.—"*Exertion* of pleasure."—New house.—Kindness of parishioners.—Twenty-fifth birth-day—Correspondence closed by death.—Visits Sabbath-school in Providence.—Hears Rev. Mr. Scoble.

CHAPTER XIV.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER DEVELOPED BY PROTRACTED SICKNESS IN 1839, ... p. 265

Taken sick at her father's.—Submission.—Suspense dreadful.—Returns to Hopkinton.—Finds house arranged.—" Constituted a *family*."—Gratitude to her father.--Disappointed by domestic help.--Looks to God to *provide* it.—Domestic cares.--Advice of Dr. S., of Boston, and Dr. B.--Looks to the " *Great Physician*."—Young man shot while gunning.—" Parting at death painful."—Letter of Mr. Webster.—A wakeful but happy night.—Pained at sickness of her brother.—Weak as a child.—Letter of her mother.—Kindness of " Cousin P."—Her mother's arrival at Hopkinton.—" A pleasant Sabbath within, though stormy without."—Grateful for kindness of her husband's mother.—Gratitude for sympathy.—Mourns the loss of mental vigor.—Some afflictions medicinal.—Nervous irritability.—244th Village Hymn precious.—Her letters " too l ng."—Inquires after her S. S. pupils of former years.—Letter to parents and the family at close of the year.—Solemn at close of the year, for several reasons.—Cannot after this " write by *every mail*."—Her past year has been happy.—Letters of the year.

CHAPTER XV.

SKETCHES OF CHARACTER AND EFFORTS IN 1840, p. 283

New-year's gifts to all around her.—Conducts family prayers in husband's absence.—" Try to feel contented, and *as willing* to be sick as *not*."—A wood-cutters' party at their minister's wood-pile.—Church awakened.—Private differences settled.—Censorious.—No excuse.--Feels her nothingness.—Solitude refreshing.—Happy influence of Mr. Crosby's lecture.—Young ladies' prayer-meeting commenced.—Remembers the sailor still.—Tedious length of a temperance lecturer's *stay* in H.—Her idea of " ministers going to Europe for their health."—Sick.—Requests Mr. W. " to examine her hope."—Sadness on hearing of the cause of Rev. Mr. F.'s dismission.—General interest in religion.—Converses with inquirers.—Rejoices at religious interest in Providence.—" A gardening bee."—Ladies' Missionary Society.—$100.—Religious interest stationary.—Politics running high.—Anxiety about her brother William.—Death of her brother William at St. Joseph's, Florida.—Visits Dr. Emmons.—His conversation.—Value of religion as a support tested.—Meaning in afflictions.—Visits Nantucket.—Nantucket Athenæum —Paintings of Prodigal Son.—The year crowned with mercies.—Religious feelings revived.—Enjoys preaching.—Attends church again three times.—Kind assistance.—Accident.--Dr. Jewett.--Calls on Dr. Abby for medical advice.—Meeting of Am. Board at Providence.--Aids the Armistad captives.—View of everlasting punishment.--Arrangements to go to Philadelphia for medical advice.—Necessary to *remain* sometime in Philadelphia.—Girard Colleges.—Laurel Hill Cemetery and Chapel.—State Lunatic Hospital.—Attends Rev. Mr. Waterman's Church in Philadelphia.—Return to Providence.—" Well for a minister to leave his people awhile."—Afflicted with neuralgia.—Return to Hopkinton.—Dr. Meigs ' God's agent.'—Dr. M.'s generosity.—Meeting of ministers' wives at Holliston.—Ladies' Miss. Society.—Reads

Blunt's History of Christ.—Distrusts her motives.—Prayer for the *church*.—Not raised from sickness for *her* enjoyment.—Notes of sermons.—Knows something of a pastor's trials.—Writing home at sunrise.—Presents of sixteen months.—Thoughts on the removal of her brother's remains from St. Joseph's.—"Depressed in spirits."—Year passed happily.—Letter-book.—Intends to write a new-year's letter every year.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUFFERINGS AND PATIENCE SEEN IN LETTERS AND JOURNAL OF 1841, ... p. 325

Visit at Unionville.—"Large correspondence."—Glad the family can rest side by side in the grave.—Contrasts herself with Mrs. S. L. Smith.—Suggestions as to prayer-meetings.—Plain preaching rewarded.—Sermon on slavery.—Gives faithful counsel.—Mr. Kirk's sermons read in the family.—Likes the practice.—Long getting well.—Calls on the people.—Affected to tears in reading Mrs. Smith's Memoir.—Sickness has "caused peevishness and childishness.—Deep regret.—Thirty-six hours suffering.—Prays not for "less pain," but "more grace."—Temperance progressive in H.—Young Ladies' Temperance Society, of thirty-three members.—Gratitude for conversion of friends seen in holier life.—Female prayer-meetings a thermometer of the piety of the church.—"Sin to be slain."—At Sabbath-school, the first time for a year and a half.—Aches soon to be left in the grave.—Averse to "*living* an invalid."—Meets a youth to whom former conversation was blessed.—Dr. Parker of China.—Temperance lecture of 100 minutes.—"Zion mourns."—"William's death" fresh in memory.—Pierpont's lecture at Hopkinton.—Pierpont's lines left in her album.—Efforts "lifeless."—Loves domestic toil.—Little attentions pleasing when from home.—Thankful for suggestion "to remember her station as a minister's wife."—Disgusted with earth.—Converses with an Irish girl upon religion.—Notice of vernal changes.—Reformed drunkards.—Anxiety to hear from sick friends.—Urges to invite Mr. Hawkins to Providence.—Prefers *temperance* hotel, to visiting.—Seamen's concert.—Called to her father's by sickness of a sister.—Selects and reads promises of God to her sister.—Solicits prayer in her sister's behalf.—Feelings in prospect of her death.—Recovery "in answer to prayer."—"Will you *be* a better Christian?"—Converses with a hopeful convert.—Letter to a little boy.—Note of an inquirer.—Call from its author.—"Glad of a *storm*."—"Excuses at prayer-meetings."—"Signs of being in Christ."—Interest of little children in her.—Letters to them.—Church praying for attendants upon a ball.—"Easy to love God.—Conversion at 75.—Christians labor.—"Finds all willing to be urged to repentance."—Close of 1841.

CHAPTER XVII.

MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS DISCLOSING HER MATURED VIEWS AND FEELINGS, ... p. 362

"*Little things*" portray life.—Mrs. W.'s "*own words* presented."—God the real source of our *gifts*.—Thanks God for *friends* to *render* presents *precious*.—Family prayer.—Neglect of family prayer dangerous.—Honoring

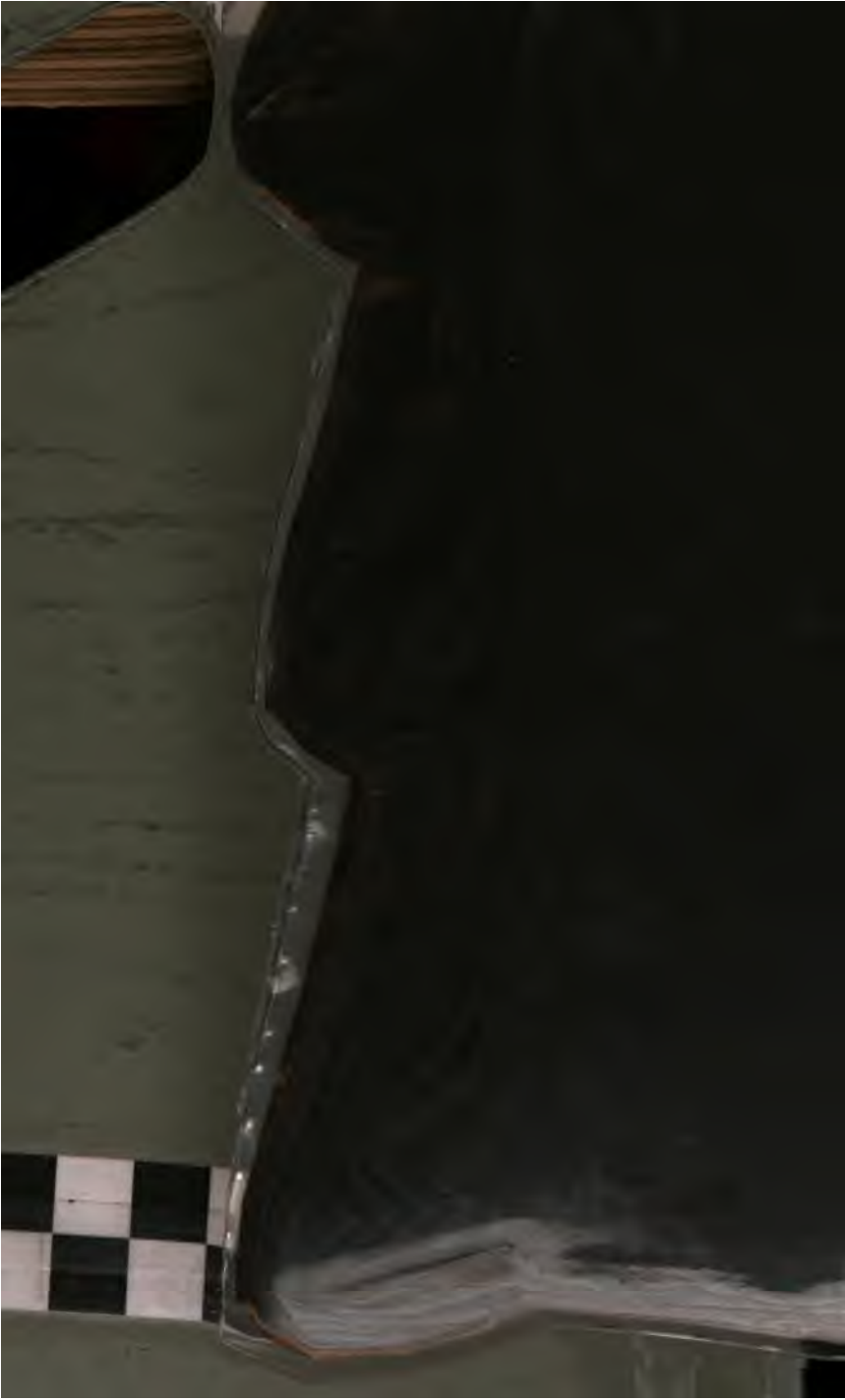
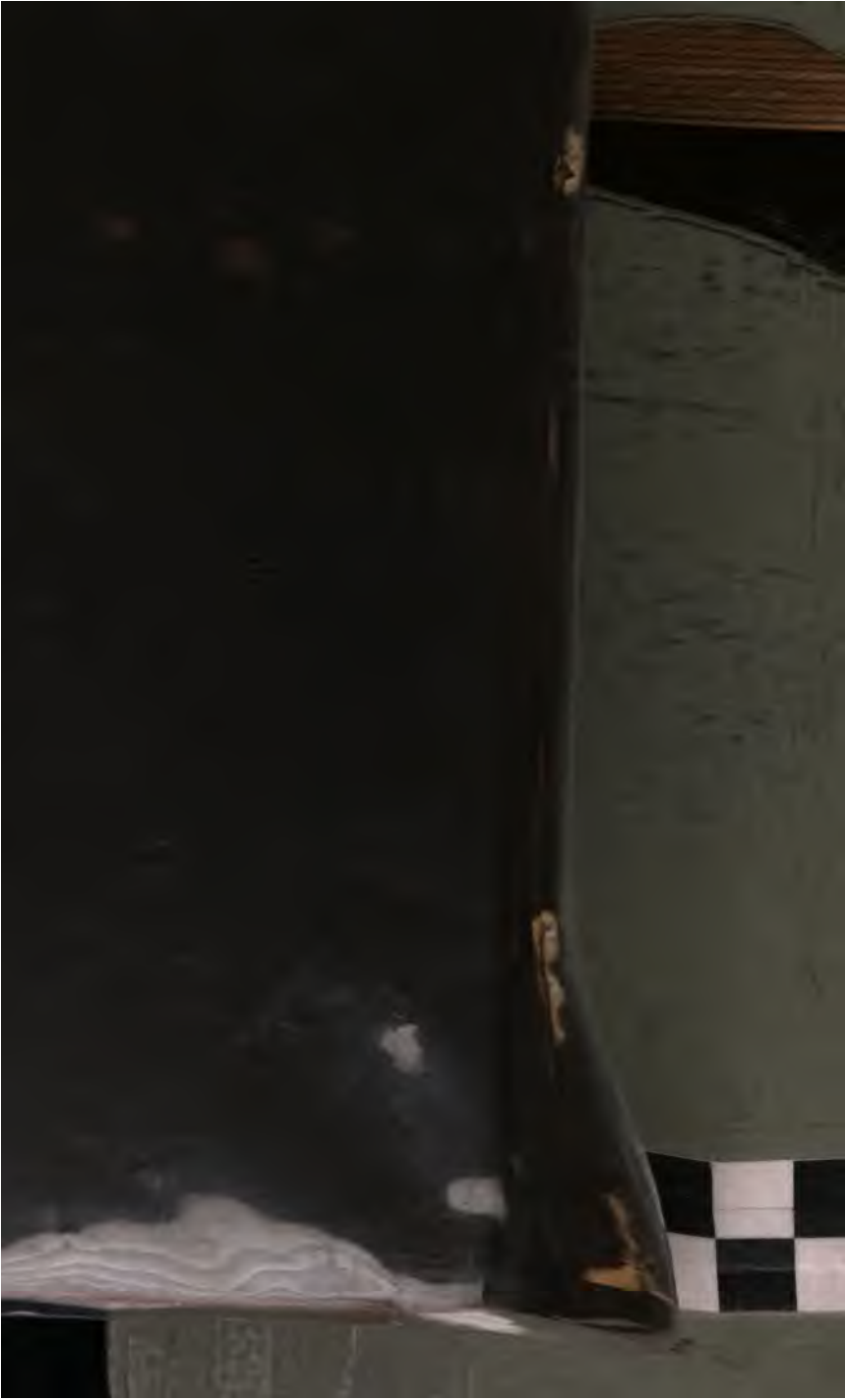
God.—Mothers' duties.—Slavery a sin.—Rulers.—Mourners.—Infatuation of mankind.—"Congregationalists behind in seeking extension."—Notices from the pulpit.—Do not "decide, and *then* insult God by asking his guidance."—Answers question, "What a minister's wife should be?"—A minister's wife should make up her mind to be happy.—Power of religion seen in a dying scene.—Proposes prayer after tea each day for a friend.—View of newspaper eulogy.—Error and sorrow associated.—Specimens of vivacity of language.—"Careless doers."—Mothers' welcome home.—Circus' noise and uproar.—Effect of deaths on her mind.—Who buried next?—Church quarrels dismiss pastors.—Religion reproached by false profession.—Immersion and sprinkling both valid.—Increased attachment to infant baptism.—Eighty converts in the Sabbath-school.—A daughter leads her father to Christ.—Deafness no reason for absence from meeting.—Neighborhood meetings.—"Revival promotes her *health*."—Ladies' meetings in six districts.—Selections of this chapter from 400 letters.

CHAPTER XVIII.

INCIDENTS OF HER HISTORY IN 1842, 3, 4, AND 5, p. 382

"Town moved."—None but ordinary means used in revival.—Candidates received.—Sense of responsibility at birth of her son.—Lonely during Mr. W.'s journey west.—"Feast of tabernacles," at Worcester.—Views of Mr. Torrey's confinement.—Her health declining.—Journey to Washington City for her health.—Her view of the influence of slavery on society at Washington.—Remembrance of fidelity to her soul in childhood and youth.—Unexpected return of disorder.—Kindness of friends. Providence.

CHAPTER XIX.

LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH, ... p. 391

Delicacy of her first suggestion that she expects soon to die.—Her boy's "little prattle sweet"—now that she must leave *him*.—Lord's supper in her sick room.—Thirty-second birth-day.—"Death has lost its terrors to me."—Gift of her journals to her husband.—Last effort of her pen.—Her cheerfulness and useful activity retained to the last.—Married life reviewed.—"Sufficient unto the day its evils."—Happiness unmarred.—Serious forebodings.—"Dying grace expected to die by."—Distress that she "had betrayed her Saviour."—Hope returns.—Cheered by visits of Dr. Tenney, Rev. Mr. Stewart, and others.—"Her distress dreadful and indescribable."—Habits of prayer.—Last prayer with her husband, "a prayer once for all."—Her spirit composed.—Cheering sentiments.—Reference to the *witness of* "*her life*."—Unable to repress thankfulness for her early conversion.—Joy at seeing again her sister E.—Dying appeal for the slave.—Parting salutations, dying admonitions.—Message to brother and sister.—Farewell counsel to her husband.—Her wish in regard to her little son.—"I think I am in Jesus' arms."—"*Elizabeth* can't sing *now*."—"Glorious hour."—"Pa, I'm dying."—Unable to speak.—Death.—Funeral.—Her own reference to her grave.—Her own voice of consolation.—A thought of her present joy.—"The thrill of parting"